ALL ABOUT HISTORY



Marco Polo
Inside his perilous journey to the pleasure dome of Kublai Khan

NELSON'S FATAL VICTORY
How Britain's naval titan won at Trafalgar but paid the price

DARK AGES MYTHS
12 reasons why they were brighter than you think

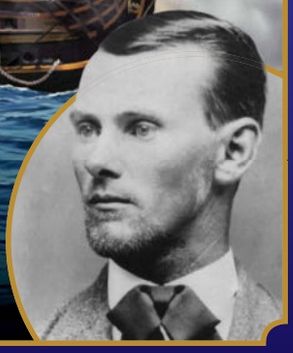
MAFIA'S City of Sin
Meet the mobster who turned a wasteland into paradise



Weimar's wild ride
How the post-war crisis set the stage for Nazism

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Wild West Robin Hood
Was Jesse James a foul felon or an outlaw hero?



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German children play with worthless bank notes at the height of hyperinflation. Find out what went wrong in the Weimar Republic on page 38

Welcome

You could say that the way to immortal stardom is to do something unique. Something original. Something completely unexpected.

On 21 October 1805, as the Battle of Trafalgar dawned, Vice Admiral Horatio Nelson declared, "England expects that every man will do his duty." But England could never have expected what this man would do next. Shunning centuries of sound naval strategy, Nelson divided his fleet into two columns and led them at right angles to the enemy line, cutting it into thirds and shattering its advantage – strength in numbers. It won him the battle and a place in the hearts and minds of every man and woman back home. The fact that his statue still stands at the geographical and cultural heart of the British capital is testament to his legacy as the nation's greatest military hero of all time. Read his remarkable story on page 28.

And don't forget, there's still time to get your hands on the first issue of our new sister magazine, **Explore History**. To get six issues for £15, plus a free bookazine worth £9.99, just visit www.imaginesubs.co.uk.



Alicea Francis
Editor

Editor's picks



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Dark Ages myths dispelled
We shed light on this oft-misunderstood period of history, from medicine to warfare as well as everything in between.



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The Battle of Alesia
Find out how the Romans under Julius Caesar defeated the Gauls with classic siege warfare tactics, and robbed them of their independence.



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Adventures of Marco Polo
Inside the Venetian merchant traveller's perilous and inspirational journey to the court of Kublai Khan in far-off Mongolia.

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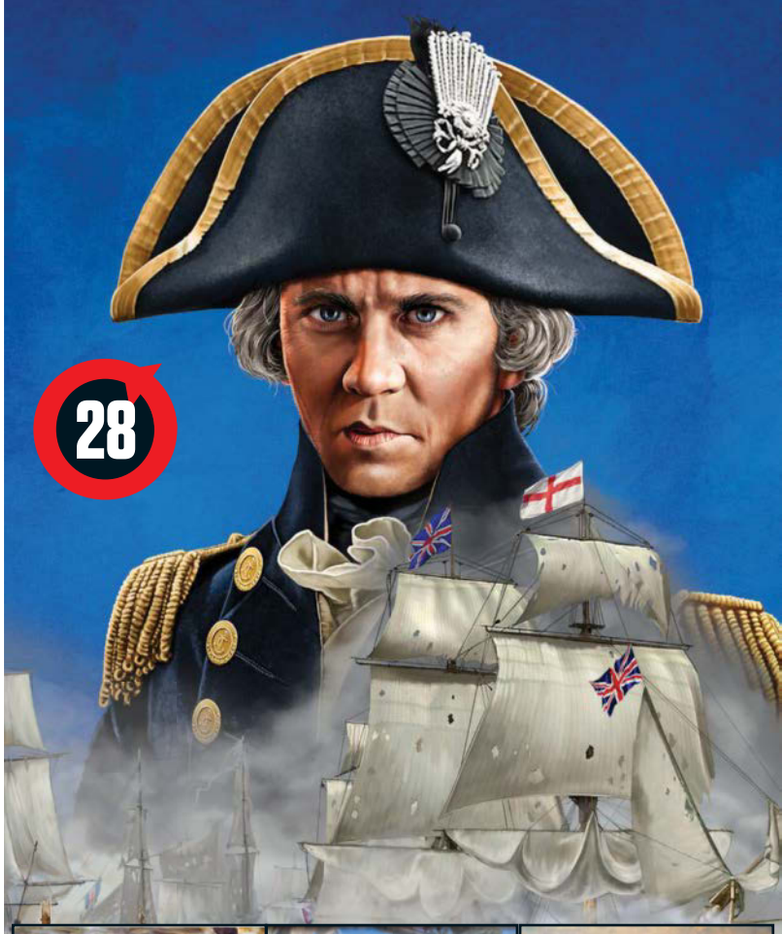
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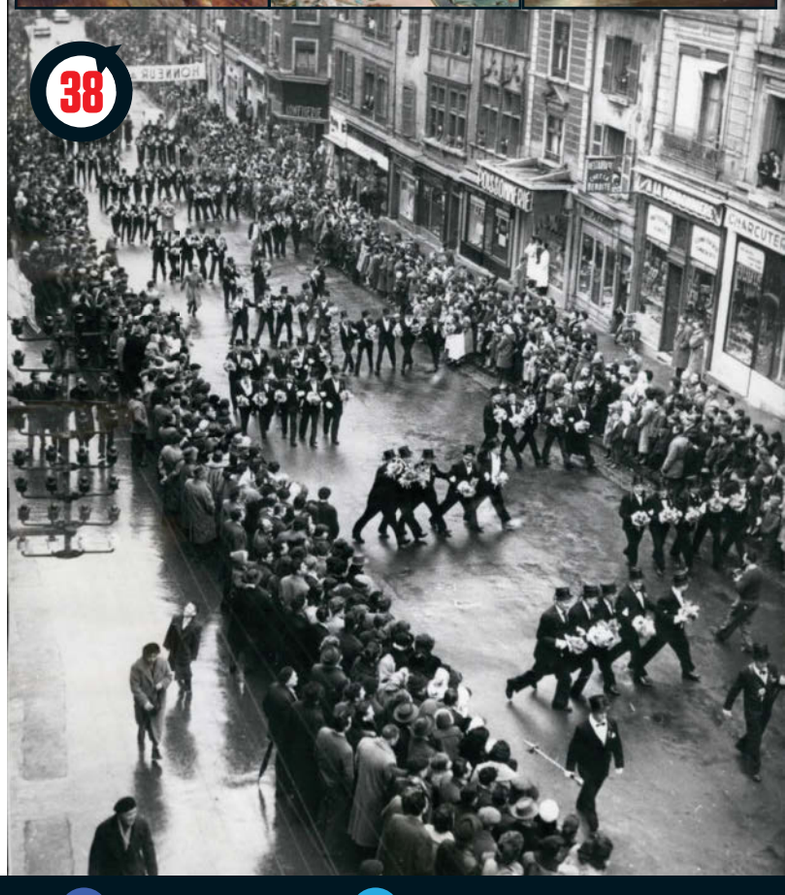
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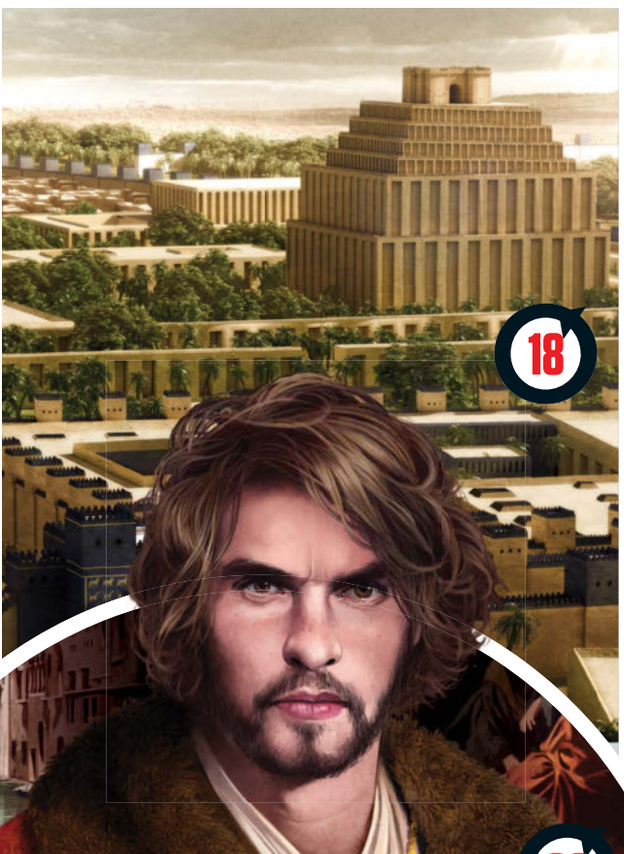
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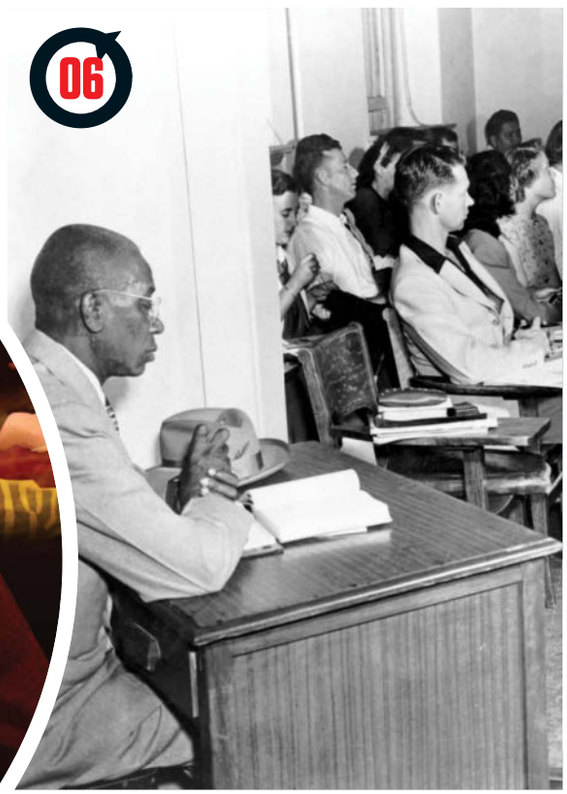












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HISTORY IN PICTURES

‘SEPARATE BUT EQUAL’

George McLaurin, the first African-American admitted to pursue a doctorate in education at the University of Oklahoma, sits outside the classroom. McLaurin had sued to gain admission to the university, basing his argument on the Fourteenth Amendment, which granted equal rights to all. However, the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine meant that he had to sit alone in the classrooms, cafeteria and library.

1948

© Alamy





HISTORY IN PICTURES

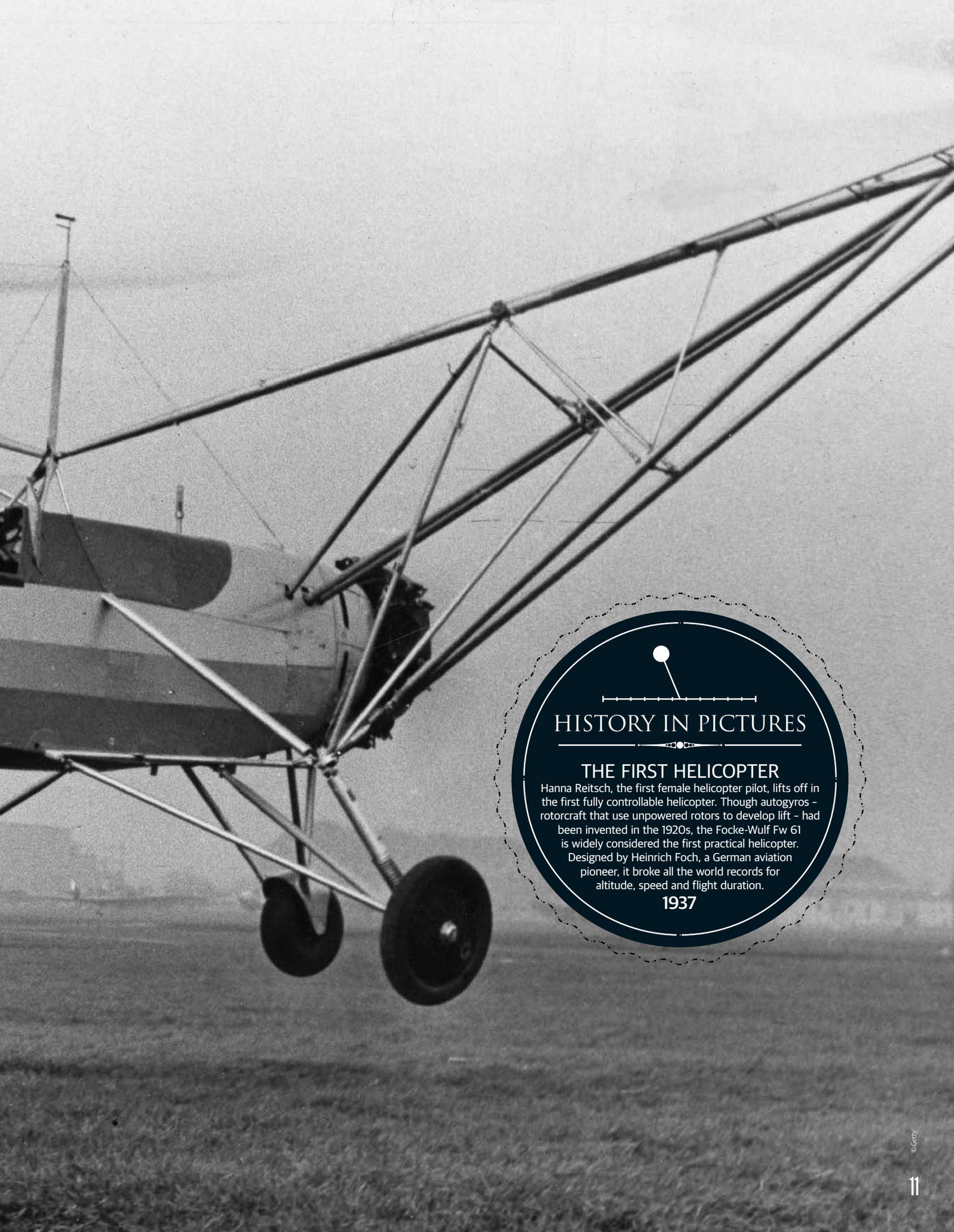
THE HAND OF GOD

Argentinean footballer Diego Maradona scores the first goal of the 1986 World Cup quarter final against England. Replays showed the goal had been struck with his hand, but Maradona claimed that it was scored, "A little with the head of Maradona and a little with the hand of God." He later went on to score another goal, winning the match and eventually the competition for Argentina.

22 June 1986

© Getty


D-EKRA



HISTORY IN PICTURES

THE FIRST HELICOPTER

Hanna Reitsch, the first female helicopter pilot, lifts off in the first fully controllable helicopter. Though autogyros – rotorcraft that use unpowered rotors to develop lift – had been invented in the 1920s, the Focke-Wulf Fw 61 is widely considered the first practical helicopter. Designed by Heinrich Foch, a German aviation pioneer, it broke all the world records for altitude, speed and flight duration.

1937

©Getty



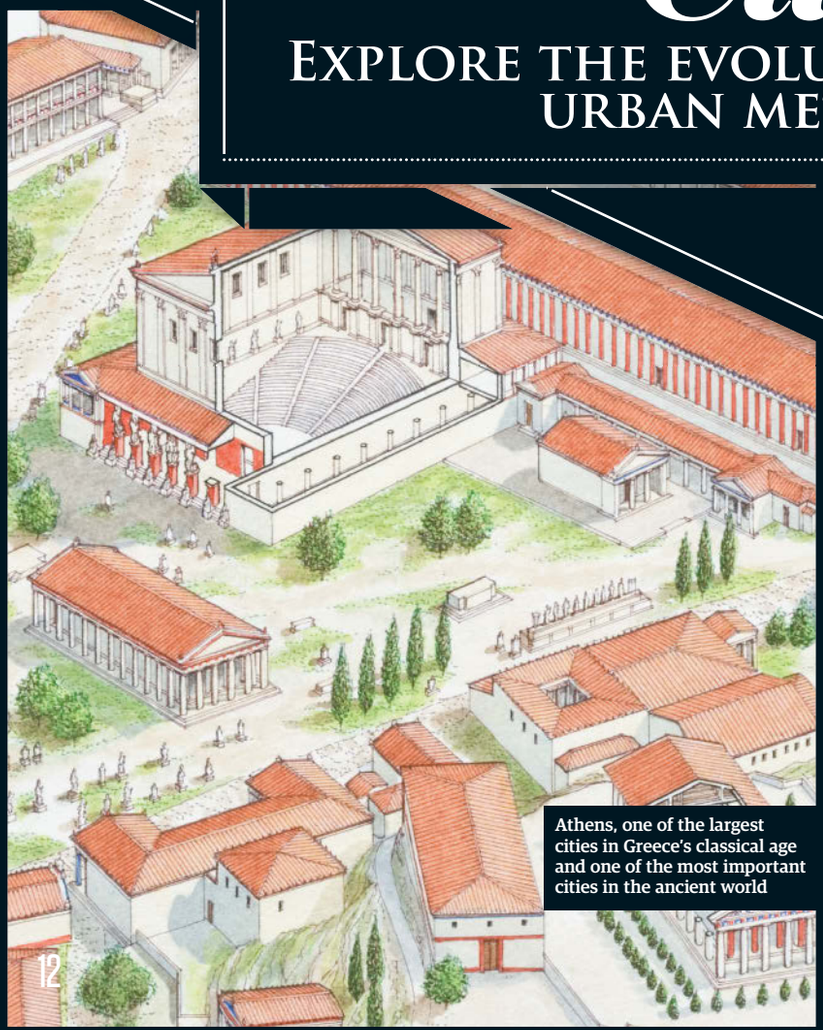
Mosques built in the Ottoman era are some of the best examples of historic Islamic architecture



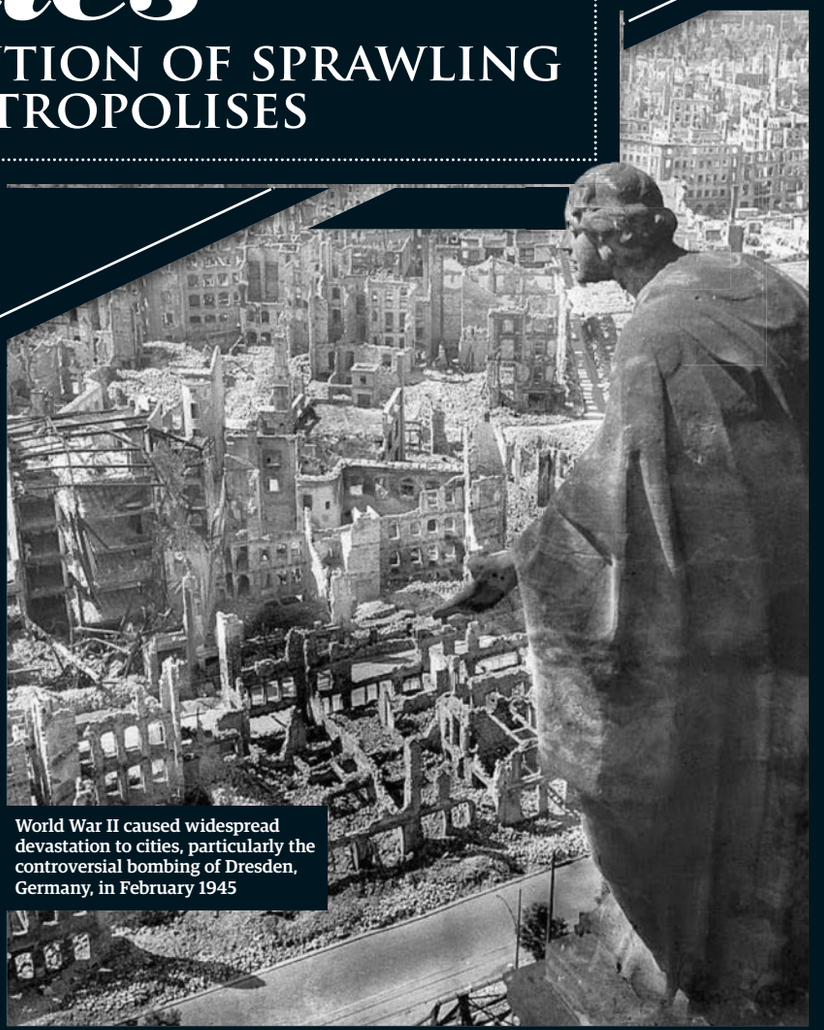
In 2014, 54 per cent of humans were living in urban areas with Shanghai, China, alone having a population of 23.9 million

Cities

Explore the evolution of sprawling urban metropolises



Athens, one of the largest cities in Greece's classical age and one of the most important cities in the ancient world



World War II caused widespread devastation to cities, particularly the controversial bombing of Dresden, Germany, in February 1945



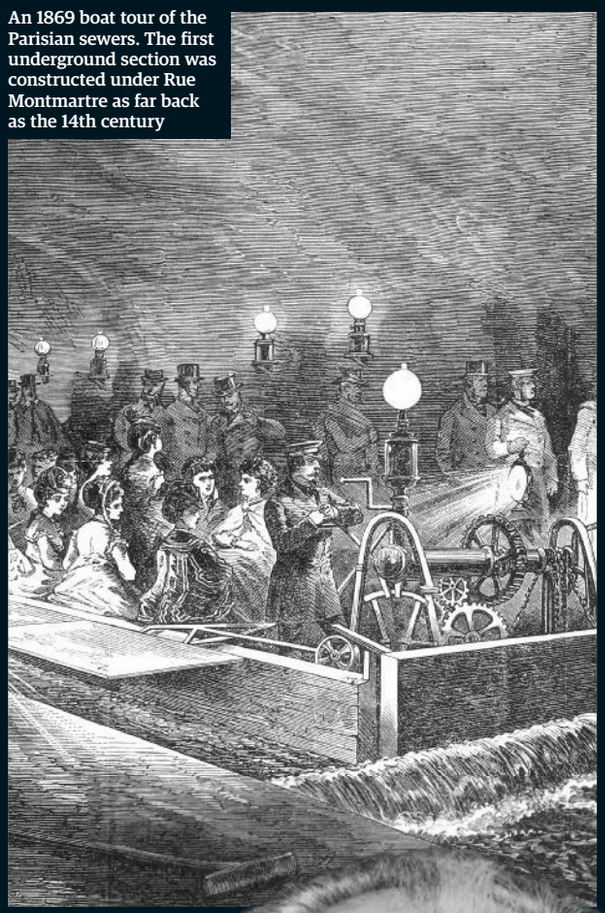
New York City is still one of the finest skyscraper cities on Earth



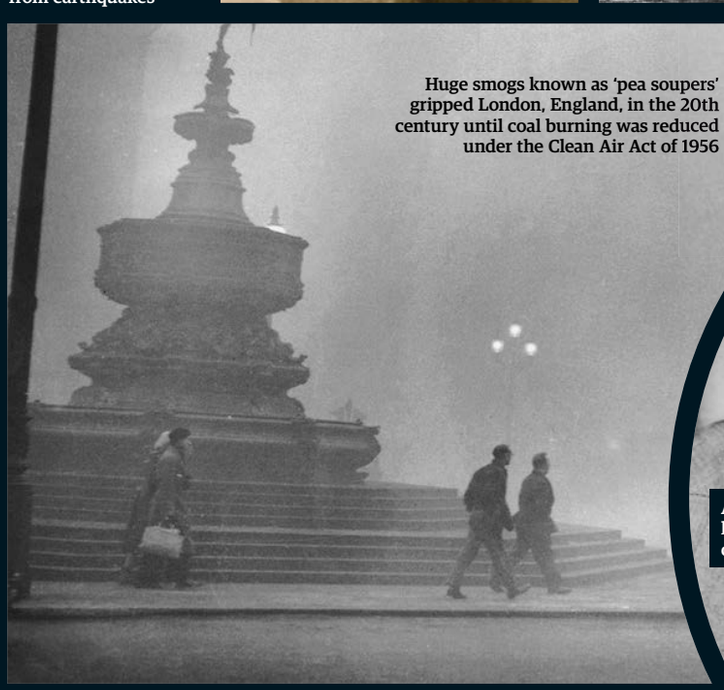
The Burj Khalifa is currently the world's tallest building at an astonishing 828 metres tall



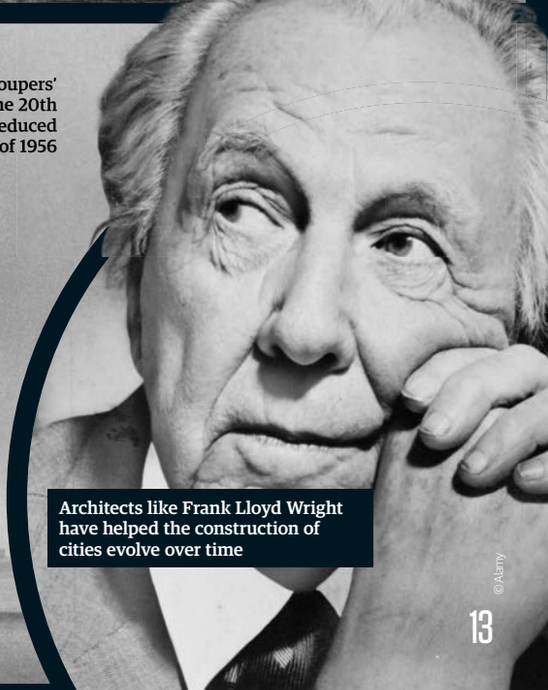
Cities that straddle tectonic boundaries, such as the San Andreas Fault, face huge risks from earthquakes



An 1869 boat tour of the Parisian sewers. The first underground section was constructed under Rue Montmartre as far back as the 14th century



Huge smogs known as 'pea soupers' gripped London, England, in the 20th century until coal burning was reduced under the Clean Air Act of 1956



Architects like Frank Lloyd Wright have helped the construction of cities evolve over time

© Alamy

Cities across history

Today, more than 50 per cent of the world's population live in urban areas. Here are some of the amazing cities from across time

JERICHO
PRESENT-DAY PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES



The first permanent settlements are developed by the river Jordan, providing fertile land for farming. Over the next 1,000 years, surrounding walls are built and Jericho becomes a huge Neolithic trading post.

9000 BCE

ROME ITALY

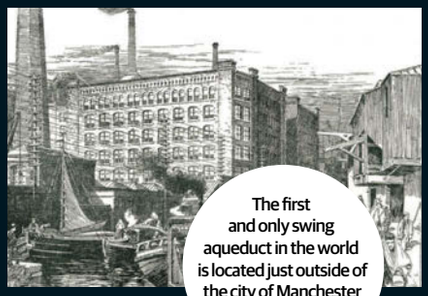


Emerging from Etruscan control, Rome becomes an independent city. Finding wealth in trade, Rome is said to have become the world's first city with a population of more than 1 million by c. 5 BCE.

753 BCE

MANCHESTER UK

Technological advances including the first railway lead to increases in population, production and trade. Manchester becomes the world's first industrial city.



The first and only swing aqueduct in the world is located just outside of the city of Manchester in Barton

1800S

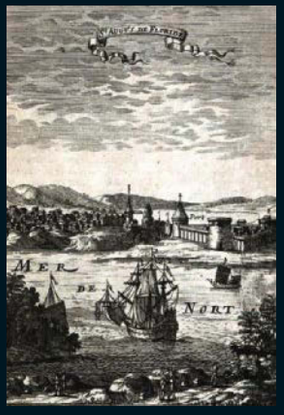
PHILADELPHIA PENNSYLVANIA, USA

William Penn proposes the idea of a rigid grid system. Uniformity makes each plot of land equal, building Penn's Quaker ideal of equality into the foundation of the city.



1682

ST AUGUSTINE FLORIDA, USA



The first permanent European settlement in North America is discovered by a Spanish explorer supposedly in search of the Fountain of Youth. It remains the only American city with Spanish architecture.

1565

PARIS FRANCE

The population density

DOUBLES without any increase in space.

Georges-Eugene Haussmann, a public administrator, creates 26,294 kilometres of new boulevards, streets and avenues, 2,000 hectares of parks and 24 new squares totalling over

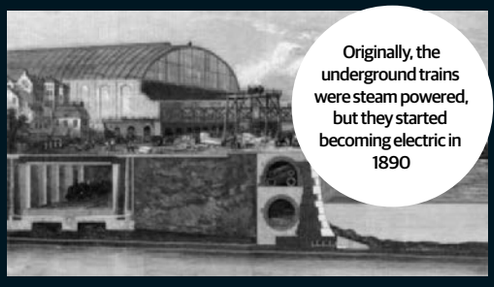
1 MILLION SQUARE FEET

600,000 trees are planted to line the city's streets.

1850S

LONDON UK

Large amounts of horse-drawn traffic have a damaging effect on city businesses leading to the world's first underground steam railway. More than 30,000 passengers board it on its opening day.



Originally, the underground trains were steam powered, but they started becoming electric in 1890

1863

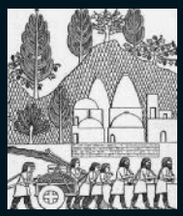
CHICAGO ILLINOIS, USA

After the Great Chicago Fire in 1871 destroyed nine square kilometres of the city, William Le Baron Jenney proposes a new metal-framed, more fire-resistant building. Standing ten storeys high, it leads to huge city developments.



1885

NINEVEH PRESENT-DAY IRAQ



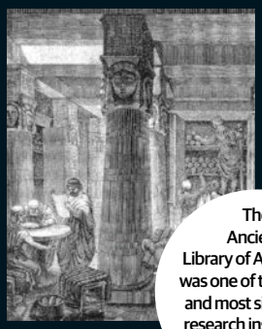
15 great gates provide entry into the city of Nineveh.

80 The number of rooms in the city's 'palace without rival'.

95 The number of kilometres the first aqueduct covers to carry water to the city's gardens. The water comes from 18 canals.

C. 700 BCE

ALEXANDRIA EGYPT



Founded by Alexander the Great, this city was the capital of Hellenistic and Roman Egypt. Alexandria's trade links brought wealth, leisure and the arts, attracting the world's greatest minds.

The Ancient Library of Alexandria was one of the largest and most significant research institutions of the ancient world

C. 331 BCE

CONSTANTINOPLE PRESENT-DAY ISTANBUL



Constantine reunites the Roman Empire and builds his new capital on the ancient city of Byzantium. It becomes a cultural and economic hub.

324

TENOCHTITLAN, PRESENT-DAY MEXICO CITY

80 The number of days Spanish forces lay siege to the Aztec capital for.

240,000 Aztecs are thought to have been killed during the siege.

7,000 tons of riches are secured for Spain and used to fund further exploration into South America.

The victory gives the Spanish their FIRST foothold in Central America.

1521

DECREASE IN URBANISATION

Famine and disease, most notably the Black Death, lead to economic decline in Europe. Only colonial areas, such as the Americas, see the rise of new cities during this era.



14TH-15TH CENTURY

VENICE ITALY

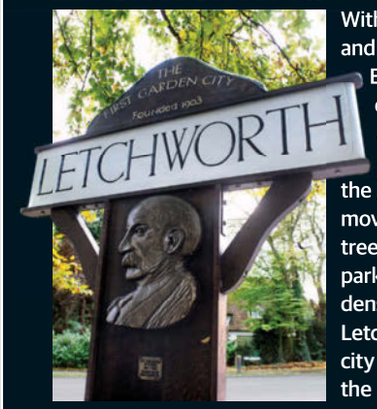
After the fall of the Roman Empire, its people sought refuge from raiders on islands. By driving wooden stakes underwater and constructing on top of them, an incredible 'Floating City' is built.



Venice consists of 118 islands connected with canals and bridges. The flow of salt water hardens the wood

C. 421

LETCHWORTH UK



With overcrowding and congestion rife, Ebenezer Howard combines town and country living, founding the garden city movement. With tree-lined streets, parks and low-density housing, Letchworth inspires city planning across the globe.

1903

PALM JUMEIRAH DUBAI, UAE



Concerned by dwindling oil reserves, Dubai looks to increase tourist trade, beginning construction on the world's largest artificial islands. Adding 78.6 kilometres of coastline, Palm Jumeirah has villas for 60,000 residents.

The materials used in the construction of Palm Jumeirah could have created a 2.5 metre wall around the world

2001

TIANJIN CHINA

With the creation of sustainable urban areas a growing concern, Tianjin becomes the biggest eco-city project in the world aiming to house 350,000 people with sustainable living by 2020.



2007

© Alamy, GettyImages

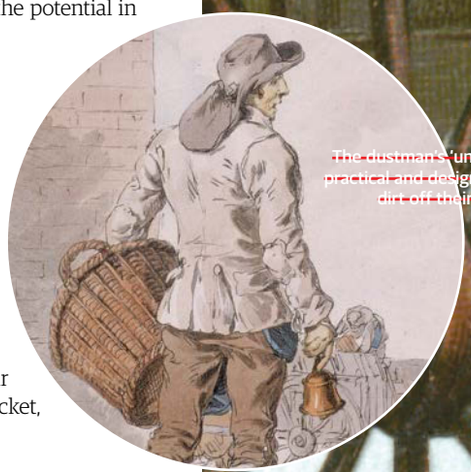
Day in the life

A VICTORIAN DUSTMAN

DISHING THE DIRT AT THE HEIGHT OF THE GREAT STINK, LONDON, 19TH CENTURY

Nowhere has the humble dustman been more invaluable than on the streets of Victorian London. Following the invention of the steam engine, factories blazed through ton after ton of coal, producing unprecedented amounts of ash and cinders. In a single household alone, an average of 11 tons of coal were burned each year. A thick, choking smog hung in the air and the city was blanketed by a layer of black dust. It was arranged for contracted dustmen to pass by once or twice a week to empty the dust-bins, but the politics of refuse collection soon led to a stinker of a crisis.

However, beyond the chaos there was huge profit to be made – as long as you could spot the potential in a rusty old pot.



The dustman's 'uniform' was practical and designed to keep dirt off their skin

GET DRESSED

As with modern refuse collectors, the working day started early. After waking, dustmen would change into an unofficial 'uniform' that distinguished them from the crowd. This consisted of a hat with a long reversed brim that prevented dirt from falling down the back of their neck, along with a loose flannel jacket, velveteen breeches and gaiters.

START THE ROUNDS

A horse-drawn cart was loaded with ladders, shovels and baskets before setting off. Dustmen worked in pairs, going from house to house and announcing their presence with a hand bell or a cry of "dust ho!" Householders or servants were expected to catch the dustmen's attention if they needed their rubbish collected, meaning many bins were often missed – only adding to the Great Stink.

FILL THE CART

Usually dust-bins were located in the basement or back garden, so dustmen would have to traipse through the house in order to reach them – portable bins would not be used until the late 1800s. Dirty footprints and blackened wallpaper were only to be expected. The 'filler' shovelled the dust-bin's contents into baskets, while the 'carrier' took them to the cart and dumped them in.



COLLECT THE TIPS

It was custom for householders to provide the dustmen with either beer or a tip for their troubles, but Victorian refuse collectors exploited this to the full. If a tip was not given, the house was often 'forgotten' during the next collection, or dust was 'accidentally' spilled through the hallways. Rubbish in the slums piled up, as dustmen bypassed them in favour of the more lucrative areas.

TO THE DUST YARD

When the cart was full, the dustmen would off-load the rubbish at their employer's dust yard. Every cartload was sifted through for items that could be profitable: food, offal and bones would be sold for manure; broken crockery could be used to make roads; and iron utensils and tins could be melted down and sold to trunk makers. Even ash was valuable, as it was used in brick making.

SHOOT UNWANTED WASTE

Any rubbish that couldn't be recycled was either dumped in 'shoots' or in the sea. Burning was also an option, but the smell caused public protest. As shoots filled up, rubbish had to be transported further and further afield, only adding to costs. The solution came in the 1870s with the invention of incinerators, which could reduce 24 tons of refuse to just four tons of useful 'clinker'.

OUTDO THE FLYING DUSTMEN

Rogue tradesmen soon caught wind of the huge profits that were to be made from recycling refuse, and began their own collections. These men, known as the 'flying dustmen', collected rubbish that the contractors had missed, and even stole directly from the dust yards. Any unwanted waste was fly tipped onto roads or fields. To prevent this, dustmen would hand out notices to householders informing them of their right to gather dust "in preference to any other dustman."

COLLECT WAGES

Despite being a lucrative trade for the dust yard owners, the dustmen themselves earned as little as ten shillings a week. They were extremely vulnerable to the changes in demand for ash, and as London grew, the supply began to exceed it. Dustmen tried to reduce costs in the only way they knew how: by cutting corners. Dozens of overflowing bins became hundreds and then even thousands.



flying dustman – the rogue [illegible] of the Victorian [illegible]

©Alamy

INSIDE HISTORY

BABYLON

NEO-BABYLONIAN EMPIRE
C.605 BCE – 562 BCE

Babylon is a name forever etched into history. The capital of the Babylonian Empire in Ancient Mesopotamia, it became one of the cultural centres of the world before being torn apart by revolt and eventually sacked in 689 BCE by the Assyrians. After a period in the doldrums, the city was restored by Nabopolassar, who defeated the Assyrians and initiated the beginning of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Babylon's renewed splendour peaked under the 43-year rule of his son Nebuchadnezzar II.

The city was located on the Euphrates river, which split Babylon into an old and a new town. The resources given by the waterway helped the population reach 500,000 inhabitants at its peak, making it one of the largest urban centres in the world at the time. During his reign, Nebuchadnezzar II ordered a mass reconstruction programme including the building of formidable inner and outer walls to protect the city from attack. Both the Hanging Gardens and the Ishtar Gate, the city's two most famous landmarks, were constructed at this time. The king supposedly built the Hanging Gardens as a present for his wife Amyitis, who missed the hills of her homeland. The magnificent structure included within it a waterfall maze and dense vegetation. Its water supply was provided by an innovative irrigation system that employed a screw pump to transport the water. Nebuchadnezzar resided in three major palaces scattered around the city, with the northern palace functioning as his summer home.

After Nebuchadnezzar's death, Babylon soon fell into ruin following its great period of prosperity and was later ruled by both the Persian and Macedonian empires. Always a city of enduring appeal, the remains continue to be a pilgrimage site today, and were part of clumsy restoration attempts by Saddam Hussein in the 1980s, who attempted to build his own palace, despoiling the city in the process.



The Euphrates river
The city was one of the primary trading points in Ancient Mesopotamia, thanks to the river that ran through its heart. Babylon was built in equal parts on the left and right banks of the river and steep embankments were constructed to contain seasonal floods. The river helped Babylon flourish as a centre of literacy and mathematics where women enjoyed equal rights with men.

Irrigation
Irrigation didn't just help water the Hanging Gardens, it was integral to the survival of the city's half a million residents. The technique was first practiced as far back as 6000 BCE and helped people settle in the dry Mesopotamian plains. Irrigation fed Babylon's crops and provided the city with a sustainable food source.

Religious centre
Babylon was undoubtedly a religious centre. The city boasted 53 temples, 955 small sanctuaries and 384 street alters, but these have all been lost since the city came to ruin. The buildings were made out of clay and required almost constant repair so have disappeared in the centuries since the Neo-Babylonian Empire fell.

Processional Avenue
The main street of Babylon, it began at the Ishtar Gate and led to the Esagila, a group of temples that surrounded the Etemenanki. The streets were set out in a grid and were extended to accommodate the incoming labour gangs who helped construct the grand palaces and temples.



Did you know?

37,278 litres of water a day is thought to have been required to keep all the plants watered in the Hanging Gardens

The Etemenanki

The main part of Babylon's skyline was a ziggurat temple, a type of structure immensely popular in the Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian empires. It was more than 90 metres high and had seven levels. Its name means 'Temple Foundation of Heaven and Earth' and it towered over the rest of the city. Scholars believe that it may be the basis of the biblical story of the Tower of Babel.

The Hanging Gardens

The most well known landmark of Ancient Babylon may never have even existed, with archaeologists and historians divided over its reality. Constructed in 600 BCE, it was irrigated using a pulley system and was one of the original Seven Wonders of the World. It was allegedly destroyed by an earthquake in the 2nd century BCE.

Wide walls

During the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, the walls surrounding Babylon became so wide that chariot races were held on the tops. The chariots were powered by four horses each and there was even room for one to turn right round on the 90-kilometre-long 'track'. This was all completed by an army of slave labourers who were also forced into creating an inscription on the walls reading, "I am Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon".

The royal palace

Nebuchadnezzar II's residence was actually a group of palaces that functioned as a separate inner city. Babylon was originally a group of several small cities, but as they grew in power and wealth, the cities merged into one. Construction of the palace was started by Nebuchadnezzar's father, Nabopolassar, and after its completion it became famous around the ancient world. In 323 BCE, one of the greatest generals of all time, Alexander the Great, died in this palace.

Ishtar Gate

Described as the most beautiful door in Babylon, the Ishtar Gate was one of eight entrances and was decorated with glass bricks and images of lions and griffins. Its served as a ceremonial entrance to Babylon's inner walls and led to the ziggurat and Esagila shrines. The 120 animal depictions on the gate and walls represented the holy animals of the Ancient Mesopotamian weather god Adad, Ishtar the goddess of love and the imperial god Marduk.

5 shocking facts about...

CONSTANTINOPLE

A POWERFUL CAPITAL CITY AND CENTRE OF ROMAN POWER

BYZANTINE EMPIRE (MODERN-DAY TURKEY), 330-1453

AT A GLANCE

When Emperor Constantine defeated Licinius at Chrysopolis and became head of the Roman Empire in the year 324, the city of Byzantium was chosen as his new Rome and renamed Constantinople. The new seat of the empire was a centre of religious and commercial importance, and a great symbol of the Roman Empire even after much of it had fallen.

01 Free bread helped keep the people happy

Constantinople attracted citizens by many means, one of which was offering free bread. While this helped bring new people to the growing city, it was also a means of preventing riots due to food shortages. 80,000 residents were eligible to collect 900 grams of free bread each day.

02 Half the city was destoryed in a fire

Following the Nika riots in January 532, which broke out after a chariot game at the Hippodrome between rival factions of Constantinople's society, a fire destroyed nearly 50 per cent of the city and killed some 30,000 citizens. It was a blow that the city never quite recovered from.

03 Prostitutes were sent to convents en masse

Empress Theodora passed laws to prevent forced prostitution. Brothels were closed across the city and she bought the women's freedom, moving them to convents where they could support themselves. Brothel keepers were banished from Constantinople and all the empire's major cities.

04 Viking explorers became its guards

Constantinople trained an elite army called the Varangian Guard between the 10th and 14th centuries. The troops were made up of Viking and Saxon soldiers, valued for their loyalty passed down through generations. One such guard, Harald Hardrada, later became king of Norway and Denmark.

05 The city was protected by a large chain

A long chain made up of links more than half a metre wide stretched across the entrance to the Golden Horn to prevent ships from accessing the city's waterway. It was bypassed on three occasions – the last of which was during the Siege of Constantinople, when the city fell, in 1453.



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+



an adoption pack

+



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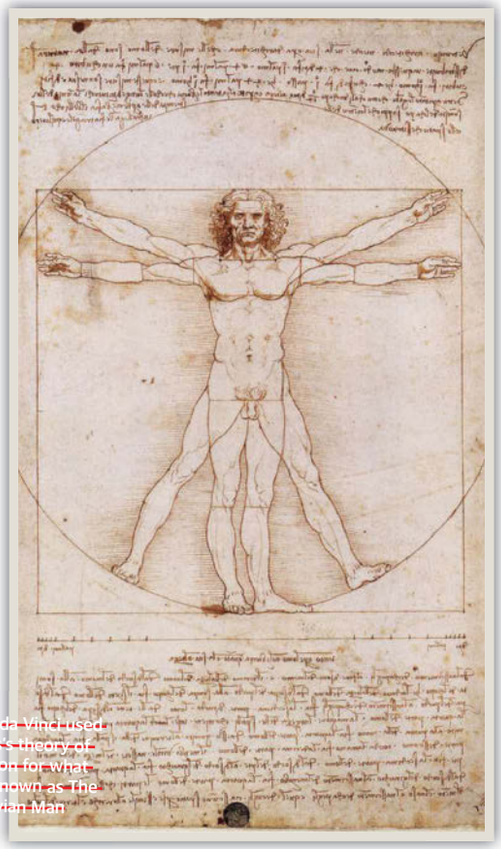
MICHELANGELO DI LODOVICO BUONARROTI SIMONI

ITALIAN 1475-1564



The dome of St Peter's Basilica

Best known for his art and sculptures – including the painting of the Sistine Chapel's ceiling as well as the statue of David – Michelangelo was also an architect who defied convention. He wasn't bound by tradition, which is clear in his creation of the Laurentian Library, which was more useful than decorative. Similarly, Michelangelo went on to design the Capitoline Square in Rome. This was unconventional in itself – rather than a square, he skewed it into a rhomboid in an attempt to rid the square of perspective effects. He was also commissioned with redesigning the iconic St Peter's Basilica, but he died before completion.



Da Vinci used the body as an illustration for what is known as the Vitruvian Man

MARCUS VITRUVIUS POLLIO

ROMAN C.80-70 BCE – C. 15 BCE

The undisputed father of modern architecture, Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, more commonly known as Vitruvius, may not be attributed to any building in particular, but his ground-breaking study *De Architectura* has shaped the history of structural design forever. The study provides an unrivalled insight into Roman cities – from machinery, aqueducts and materials to the orders of construction and city planning. Vitruvius's work became increasingly relevant during the Renaissance, with artists and architects alike using his writings as a working manual.



To date, Hadid's architecture firm employs more than 400 people

ZAHA HADID

IRAQI-BRITISH 1950-2016

Born in Iraq, Zaha Hadid attended boarding schools in Britain and Switzerland before studying at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. Her work has become known worldwide for its contemporary and mathematical inspiration. After setting up her own firm in 1980, Hadid's reputation blossomed, and inside London's Millennium Dome she was asked to design the Mind Zone – a testament to her impact on not just a national, but also an international level. At the age of 65, Hadid passed away after a heart attack in hospital. Despite this, her legacy lives on – as does her company, which will continue without her.



Sullivan was renowned for believing that 'form followed function' in architecture

LOUIS HENRY SULLIVAN

AMERICAN 1856-1924

Born in the USA but of Irish descent, Sullivan had an appreciation for urban environments from a young age. Often referred to as the 'father of skyscrapers', Sullivan's approach to architecture was innovative and unconventional. Disillusioned with Classical ideas, Sullivan and his partner, Dankmar Adler, revolutionised Chicago with their steel high-rise buildings. While Adler handled the mechanics behind the buildings, Sullivan's natural talent for design and façades saw the two become a harmonious duo.

Sullivan's style influenced a new architectural movement known as the Prairie School in the USA's Midwest



Inigo Jones's work may be synonymous with great architecture now, but he was relatively unknown during his life

Jones was first sent to Italy to study drawing, then later went to Denmark, where King Christian insisted he design palaces

INIGO JONES

WELSH 1573-1652

One of the first architects to implement the works of Vitruvius after the rediscovery of *De Architectura*, Inigo Jones is credited with introducing classical Roman style to Britain. The most notable of Jones's works influenced by Vitruvius is the Banqueting House at Whitehall, which features numerous motifs and styles as explained in *De Architectura*. Alongside this, Jones is often credited with modelling the first functional square in London's Covent Garden, from which many later squares took their inspiration.



Alongside her partner, Robert Venturi, Brown is one of the most respected architects of the 20th century

DENISE SCOTT BROWN

AMERICAN 1931-PRESENT

Envisioning a life in architecture since she was five years old, Denise Scott Brown moved to Britain in 1952, where she attended the Architectural Association School of Architecture. She went on to teach, then later joined her husband's company, which became known as Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates. In 1975, Brown bravely wrote an essay on sexism and discrimination in the male-dominated world of architecture, though the fear of damaging her career meant that she refrained from publishing it until 1989.

MIMAR SINAN

TURKISH C. 1490-1588

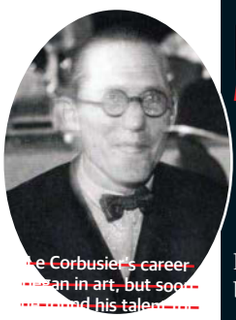


A contemporary of Michelangelo – the two men were considered masters of architecture

The architect and engineer of several sultans of the Ottoman Empire, Mimar Sinan's influence on eastern architecture is unrivalled. In a style that embraced Byzantine design with an Islamic twist, Sinan's legacy endures to this day. His work mainly focused on mosques, but he also has dozens of bath houses, mausoleums and even hospitals to his name. Upon his death in 1588, he was buried in Istanbul in a tomb of his own design.

CHARLES-ÉDOUARD JEANNERET-GRIS (LE CORBUSIER)

SWISS & FRENCH 1887-1965



Le Corbusier's career began in art, but soon turned his talents [illegible]

Championed as a pioneer of modern architecture, Le Corbusier focused on the slum problem in Paris. As well as designing his Immeubles Villas – essentially apartment blocks – he was determined to produce a city plan. This was a concept that would play a large role in the rest of Le Corbusier's life, with his Contemporary City idea of 1922 and the Plan Voisin of 1925 culminating in the publication of *La Ville Radieuse* in 1935, which was an amalgamation of his ideas. After World War I, Le Corbusier attempted to realise his ideas, constructing small blocks in Marseille, as well as Chandigarh in India.

"Architecture aims at eternity" ***Christopher Wren***

JULIA MORGAN

AMERICAN 1872-1957



As well as her work on YWCA buildings, Morgan was known for her work on Hearst Castle

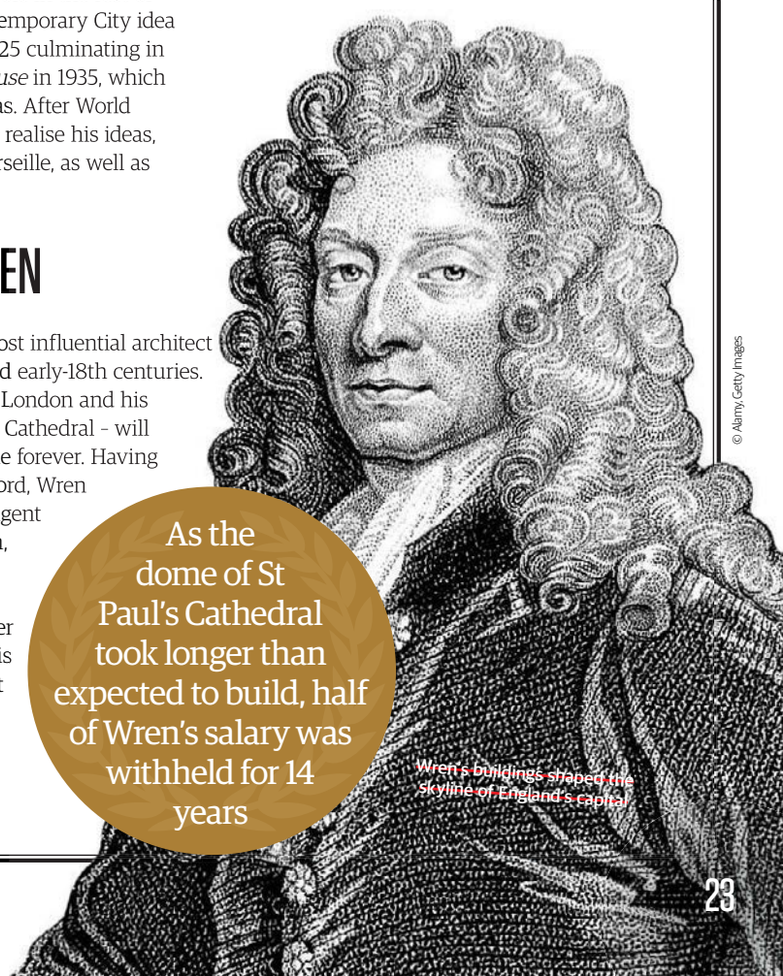
California-born architect Julia Morgan never flew too far from the nest, with more than 700 of her designs built in the state. She often used her skills for the female cause, constructing institutions women benefited from, including the YWCA. However, accomplishing her dream as an architect was her biggest challenge. The prestigious École national supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris had opened to women in 1897, but Morgan's first two attempts to enter failed. After her successful third attempt, she went on to become the first woman to earn a certificate in architecture.

CHRISTOPHER WREN

ENGLISH 1632-1723

Sir Christopher Wren was the most influential architect in Britain during the late-17th and early-18th centuries. His designs can be seen all over London and his most famous building – St Paul's Cathedral – will be an icon on the capital's skyline forever. Having studied at Wadham College, Oxford, Wren was by all accounts a very intelligent man. Knowledgeable about Latin, astronomy, mechanics and mathematics, Wren's natural abilities fared him well in his later experiences with architecture; his first commissions as an architect included Pembroke College, Cambridge, and the Sheldonian theatre in Oxford. It was these two designs upon which Wren's reputation prospered.

As the dome of St Paul's Cathedral took longer than expected to build, half of Wren's salary was withheld for 14 years



Wren's buildings shaped the skyline of England's capital

© Alamy, Getty Images

How to BUILD A SKYSCRAPER

NO 20TH-CENTURY CITY IS COMPLETE WITHOUT A TOWERING HIGH-RISE NEW YORK CITY, 1930-31

The Empire State Building may not have been the first skyscraper ever built, but it is among the most iconic. Its rapid and efficient construction, and record of being the tallest building in the world for close to 40 years, helped New York City become the world's ultimate skyscraper city in the early-20th century. Other blocks such as the Chrysler Building were also built in this era and represented a new type of Art Deco high-rise design. The Empire State's continued importance to the city demonstrates its ability to evolve with the times, more than eight decades after the first foundation was laid.

Touch the sky

Be the tallest by any means necessary. The Empire State Building's mast was built specifically to surpass the Chrysler Building.

Stock up on supplies

A vast amount of building material will be required. Purchase as much concrete and steel as you need to complete the job.

Time to hire

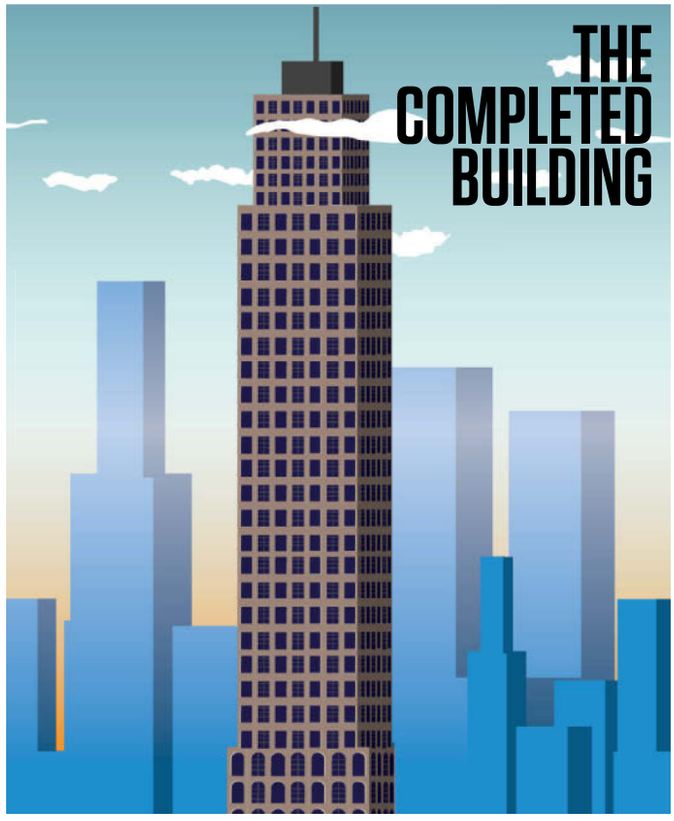
A dedicated and motivated workforce is the key to getting the high-rise up and standing in the shortest possible time.

Engineered to last

New breakthroughs in design come thick and fast so it's essential that the skyscraper can adjust to new technology.

Natural hazards

The tower must be made to last by being able to endure extreme weather and withstand potential seismic activity.



WHAT YOU'LL NEED











01 The vision

Before construction can begin, a foolproof plan needs to be devised. The brief is to create the tallest building in the world and win the skyscraper race against other countries and also other cities within the USA. Sketched drawings and scale models will be needed to get the structural blueprints just right and a plan of expenditure drawn up.



02 Assemble the workforce

After planning permission has been confirmed, it's time to get to work. The construction of the Empire State Building was actually helped by the 1929 Wall Street Crash as it meant 4,000 men had fallen on hard times and were willing to work for reduced fees. In total, construction cost $41 million, less than half the anticipated expenditure.

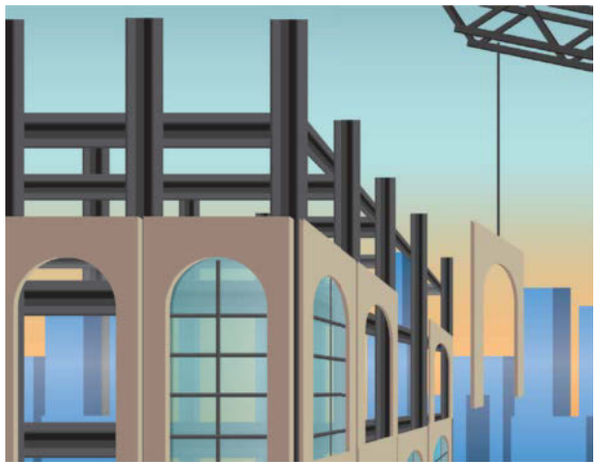
How not to... build a skyscraper

A 105-storey pyramid known as the Ryugyong Hotel dominates Pyongyang's skyline, but it has a chequered development history. The 330-metre structure is the tallest building in North Korea but has taken an excruciating 25 years to construct at a cost of $750 million – or two per cent of the country's GDP – and it still isn't fully finished!

Beginning in 1986, the project had a promising start, before it was first delayed and then completely halted in 1992 after the collapse of the Soviet Union sent North Korea into economical oblivion. There was a short-lived reprise in 2008 when the Egyptian company Orascom Telecom took the design reins but it seems to have run into trouble again. The Ryugyong Hotel is still uninhabited and remains a forbidding concrete skeleton. It has been dubbed 'the Hotel of Doom' or 'the Phantom Hotel' as a result. A complete failure, a reopening attempt in 2013 was yet another false dawn.





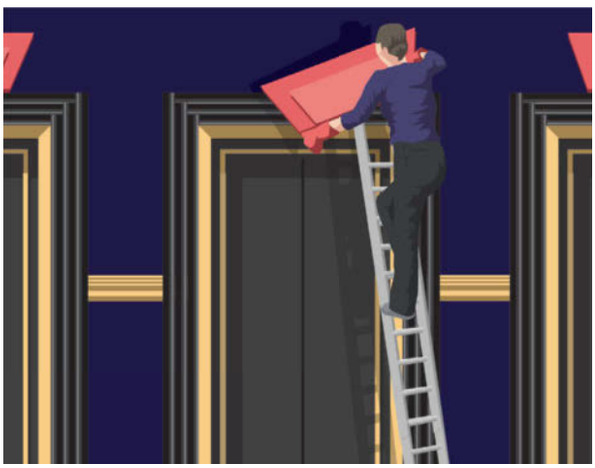


03 Start the build

The main support columns consist of a mesh of chrome, nickel and steel alloy wires interlocked into reinforced concrete. As the construction escalates, the higher floors are accessed by platforms hoisted by large winches, which take up the heavy loads. Food concessions are placed on every few floors to prevent a journey all the way to street level for lunch breaks.

04 The exterior

A mix of glass, metal and stone are used to encircle the structure's framework for a combination of strength and attractive aesthetics. The Empire State Building was built from Bedford Indiana Limestone in an Art Deco style consisting of bold lines and symmetry. There is very little ornamentation on the building, but this adds to its minimalist charm.





05 Finishing touches

To make the skyscraper inhabitable, telephone wires, plumbing, lighting and heating systems need to be installed. The inclusion of elevators was vital, as these provide quick access to the higher floors. The construction of the Empire State was so efficient that it was finished 12 days ahead of schedule, springing up at a rate of 4.5 storeys per week.

06 Grand opening

After you've stood back and admired your handiwork, it's time to put on an elaborate opening ceremony. The Empire State Building was completed quickly to attract buyers as soon as possible, and officially opened on 1 May 1931. President Herbert Hoover turned on the skyscraper's lights for the first time by pressing a button 360 kilometres away in Washington, DC.

4 FAMOUS... SKYSCRAPER INNOVATORS



WILLIAM F LAMB

1883-1952, USA

One of the brains behind the Empire State Building, he helped get all 102 storeys completed in less than 18 months.



ADRIAN SMITH

1944-PRESENT, USA

One of the most sought-after architects, Smith designed the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world today.



JEANNE GANG

1964-PRESENT, USA

A pioneer of sustainable design techniques, Gang is best known for the Aqua Tower, an 82-storey skyscraper in downtown Chicago.



RENZO PIANO

1937-PRESENT, ITALY

The Italian engineer was chosen to design the tallest skyscraper in the European Union, the Shard, which towers at just under 310 metres above London.

© EdCrooks

THE Anatomy of A TOWN CRIER

BRITISH EMPIRE AND COLONIES, 18TH CENTURY



TRICORNE HAT

THE ICONIC HEADGEAR THAT BECAME ASSOCIATED WITH THE TOWN CRIER

The tricorne was a popular hat during the 18th century but it wasn't always the set look of the town crier. The style was donned at the time in an attempt to look similar to other figures of authority as well as draw attention to the town crier.

SPREADIN' THE NEWS

DON'T SHOOT THE MESSENGER

Many townspeople were illiterate, and having news dictated to them was an effective way of keeping them up to speed on current affairs. Even if the news caused upset, harming town criers was treason. "Don't shoot the messenger" was what the crier would use as their defence if things got ugly!

THE BELL

A RINGING AIR OF AUTHORITY IN THE EMPIRE'S CITIES

The saying something 'rings a bell' could originate from the news being told by a crier. It is believed bells were used during the Great Fire of London to spread the word, allowing many to escape the inferno. On occasion, the crier's wife rang the bell while the husband delivered the news.

LOWER-CLASS CRIERS

THERE WERE FREELANCE CRIERS AS WELL AS OFFICIAL ONES

Some town criers evolved from the role of a watchman who initially guarded gatehouses. Not all of them were hired by the king or a local baron though. Some were much lower in social standing and would be paid a pound or two to deliver messages between families, friends and communities.

POSTING PROCLAMATIONS

SHOUTING THE NEWS WASN'T ENOUGH; IT HAD TO BE NAILED TO DOORS TOO

Appointed specifically by the mayor, town criers were often the best orators in the entire community. They had other roles as well and would nail scrolls of their proclamations to the doors of local inns. This is where the naming of newspapers as 'The Post' comes from.

"HEAR YE! HEAR YE!"

THE ART OF BELLOWING ANYTHING THAT THE LOCALS NEEDED TO HEAR

Town criers were one of the chief methods of communication in Europe from the Middle Ages to the 18th century. The declarations ranged from local market news to law changes, and the criers would lead criminals to public hangings and floggings. 'Hear ye' is a translation of the Anglo-Norman word 'Oyez', which means 'hear'.

OUTFIT

HOW TO STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD

The 'classic' town crier look of white breeches, black boots and red and gold robes was popular but not the only one adopted in the 18th century. Many town criers wore different, plainer clothes but the red colour was prevalent due to many being former soldiers.

© Kevin McGivern

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ENGLAND EXPECTS

NELSON AND THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR

Written by Frances White

For Britain, Trafalgar was the last hope against a French invasion, but for Nelson, it was the final battle against a far more fearsome foe

Just before noon on 21 October 1805, Admiral Viscount Horatio Nelson stood aboard the deck of his flagship HMS Victory. A light westerly wind whistled through the air, and in the distance he could see the frigates of the Franco-Spanish fleet. For weeks he had bided his time, patiently waiting, reviewing tactics and planning every action down to the finest detail. Now, finally the hour had come, and he signalled for his fleet to begin the attack. In less than five hours, he would experience a victory that would define his life, and a loss that would end it.

Today Nelson is remembered as one of Britain's greatest heroes – a warrior, a commander and a victor. However, when he entered this world on 29 September 1758, the sixth of 11 children, he was a sickly baby. His parents were so fearful that he would not survive that they had him baptised early. This occurrence would begin a lifelong tradition of battling and succeeding against the odds.

The Nelson family were not unknown, but they certainly weren't particularly wealthy and they had to exploit their connections to ensure a steady future for their children. Nelson's mother, Catherine Suckling, was a distant relative of Robert Walpole, first prime minister of Great Britain. However, tragically, Nelson's mother died when the boy was just nine. It was to be his maternal uncle who would have the biggest influence on his life, as aged just 12, Nelson began his naval career serving under his uncle, Captain Maurice Suckling, on the HMS Raisonnable.

When Nelson joined the navy, it was in the lowest ranks. However, perhaps the result of being a sixth child in a large family, he sought glory above all else. This quest to make a name for himself and achieve renown fuelled a work ethic that soon impressed his superiors and saw him ascend through the ranks at a rapid rate. This was particularly impressive for a boy who suffered from extreme sea-sickness.

After crossing the Atlantic several times, Nelson, eager to experience as much as possible, obtained a position on HMS Carcass. The ship was set on an expedition across the Arctic to find the fabled northwest passage to India. This was a very perilous mission, and was ultimately unsuccessful, with the ship forced to turn back. However, along the way, an eager 15-year-old Nelson decided to pursue a polar bear across the ice. Young, intrepid and fearless, thanks to a sudden crack in the ice separating the beast from Nelson, the headstrong boy was granted another last minute escape from likely death.

The eager young sailor saw his first action when he was stationed aboard Seahorse in the



Life in Nelson's Navy

Serving under Nelson, many 19th-century sailors faced graver dangers than the enemy

Work & warfare

Sailors usually started their careers as boys, but during wartime the navy needed an additional 60,000 men for the fleet, and this could include those who had never gone to sea. The skilled work was carried out by about 20 per cent of the crew, while the rest dealt with heavy hauling.

Food & drink

Food on board was of varying quality, and the meat was salted and placed in barrels for preservation. Although much of the food was bland and dry, sailors received regular meals. They were entitled to a gallon of beer each day and drunkenness on board was a big problem in the navy.

Discipline & punishment

Discipline on board ships was harsh, but it was equally harsh on land. The rules on a ship, known as the Articles of War, declared that men could be hung for mutiny, treason, desertion or sodomy. Lesser forms of punishment were starting, running the gauntlet and flogging.

Health & hygiene

With men living in such cramped, damp conditions, disease was rampant, with 50 per cent of all Royal Navy deaths in 1810 attributed to it. Surgery was far from advanced, with amputations used for any injured limbs, and there are accounts of tubs filled with severed body parts during battles.

Pay & benefits

Poverty forced many men to sea, and on top of their annual salary, the riches gained from capture of an enemy vessel were divided among the men based on rank. Captains enjoyed three-eighths of the reward, however, Nelson often complained about his lack of prize money as he was posted away from bountiful areas.

East Indies. It was only a brief exchange of volleys, but Nelson was gaining experience and watching carefully. He was a fast learner and had a quick mind for naval tactics, so when a case of malaria caused him to be discharged, it affected him badly. While recovering, Nelson faced another battle, but this time with depression. For someone so determined to prove their worth and make a name for themselves, coming so close to a death of relative obscurity was a difficult pill to swallow. However, his proud, optimistic spirit won through, and fuelled by patriotism and renewed determination, Nelson passed the lieutenant exam and set sail again, this time into the perilous heart of the War of American Independence.

Aged just 20, Nelson was given command of a frigate and experienced his first taste of command, attacking Spanish settlements in Nicaragua. The operation was a success, and Nelson was commended for his quick thinking and valiant actions. However, this success did not last, as almost the entire British force was struck down with yellow fever. Nelson himself barely recovered with his life, and when he returned to sea in 1784, it was not to a life of daring battles and valiant successes. Instead Nelson's role was to enforce the Navigation Act. He made many enemies, and the loneliness of command saw him sink back into despair and depression. When he returned home, he found himself unpopular with his kinsmen, without any appointment, and unemployed for five long years.

Nelson was battered and bruised, but he was not defeated. His marriage to the widow Frances Nisbet, who had a five-year-old son, revitalised a man who was already far older than his 29 years. Meanwhile, overseas, events were happening that would affect the path his life would take forever. The people of France were rebelling, the king had been killed, the world was watching and finally, Nelson was given a ship: the 64-gun Agamemnon.

At last things in Nelson's life were looking up – he had a loving wife at home, a fast powerful ship under his command, and an able crew who listened and followed his orders. This dynamic life suited Nelson, and in it he began to flourish. The enthusiastic young man was still there, but another side was emerging, a capable commander and flashes of genius. It was during this period, while defending the port of Toulon, that Nelson first crossed swords with a 24-year-old French Artillery officer by the name of Napoleon Bonaparte.

> "Nelson had never desired a long, comfortable life, he was a master of the seas and a seeker of adventure"

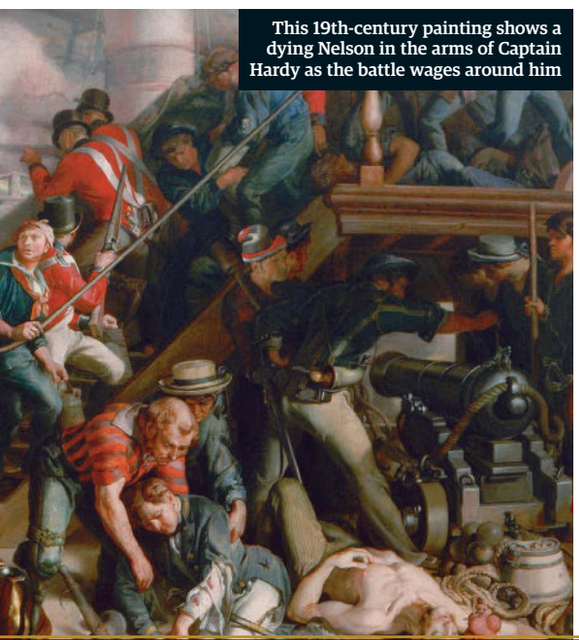
It was during this period of revolution, unrest and war that Nelson achieved some of his lesser known but equally notable victories against the Spanish at Cape Vincent in 1797 and at the Battle of Copenhagen. The bold, intrepid commander was beginning to carve a name for himself. His men adored him because not only was he extremely capable, but he was also daring – a trait that cost him the sight in his right eye. In the British Navy he was something of a rebel, ignoring orders to withdraw. In one instance during the battle of Copenhagen, he lifted his telescope to his blind eye, pretending not to see the command to withdraw. Nelson's force of will and bullish British spirit won him victory after victory, and although he was admired greatly as a leader, a remnant of the young man seeking affirmation and glory remained. Depression and self doubt were demons that Nelson was doomed to fight until his final day, foes that even a million naval victories and commendations could not vanquish.

Although a peace treaty had been signed with France in 1802, just a year later war broke out once again. Nelson was appointed commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean fleet and hoisted his flag





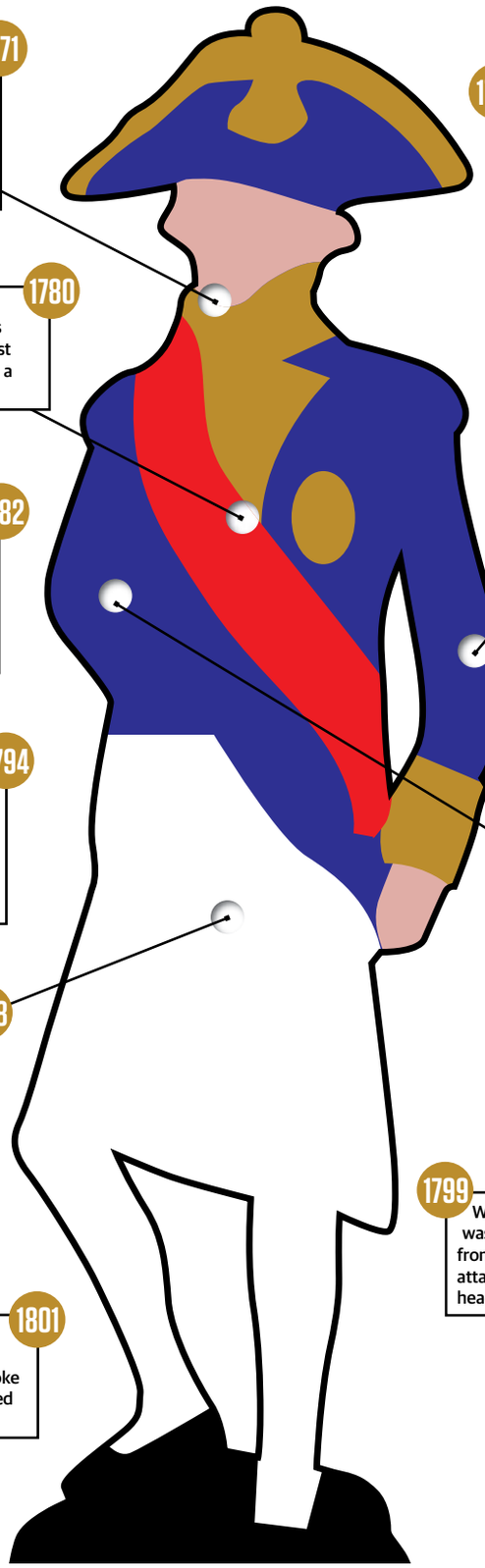
Nelson's easily recognisable medals made him a high-value target for French sharpshooters at Trafalgar



This 19th-century painting shows a dying Nelson in the arms of Captain Hardy as the battle wages around him

Nelson's Illnesses and Injuries

Nelson's tendency to put himself in the heart of battle led to him suffering an abundance of ailments throughout his seafaring career



1771
When Nelson's naval career began, so did his ongoing battle with a sailor's worst nightmare – chronic seasickness. Nelson suffered with the ailment for the rest of his life.

1776
Nelson suffered his first bout of what would be a reoccurring sickness – malaria. This first attack almost took his life, but also gave him a vision of a voice telling him that he would become a hero.

1780
In San Juan, Nelson suffered from a cornucopia of ailments – dysentery, yellow fever, chest pain and even poisoning from a toxic fruit.

1781
While in London, Nelson complained that his left arm and leg were causing him distress. The fingers on his left hand were also white, numb and swollen.

1782
Like many sailors at the time, Nelson and his crew suffered from scurvy, and this would become a repetitive sickness that the admiral would later work to eliminate on his ships.

1787
Upon returning from the West Indies, Nelson was struck down with a fever so severe that a keg of rum was prepared to preserve his body if he were to pass away.

1794
In Bastia, Nelson was almost killed by a huge amount of dirt from a heavy shot falling on him. Days later, he was hit by earth and rocks from an explosion and was blinded in his right eye.

1797
In the midst of battle, Nelson received a musket ball shot above his right elbow. It was declared that he was killed, but the ship's surgeon amputated his forearm. Half an hour later, he returned to battle.

1798
Nelson was hit with a fragment of shot during battle. Again he declared himself dead, but continued on commanding the battle while bleeding profusely. Nelson suffered with blinding headaches for the remainder of his life.

1799
While in Palermo, Sicily, Nelson was reported to be suffering from what he believed to be heart attacks, accompanied by depression, headaches, sickness and indigestion.

1801
Again Nelson proclaimed his death was close when he suffered from severe heatstroke and vomiting, but he recovered remarkably quickly.

1805
During the Battle of Trafalgar, Nelson was struck in the shoulder and spine. Once more he stated: "I have but a short time to live." This time he was correct.



Today HMS Victory is on display at the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

on the ship that would be forever linked with his name, HMS Victory. His mission was to blockade Toulon to prevent French ships there meeting up with those in the Atlantic and also Spanish ships in Cadiz and Cartagena. Britain was well aware that the prize Napoleon desired most of all was invasion of their own country, and its ultimate destruction. With the combined force of these ships, that invasion was a very real possibility. If united, this single invincible fleet could take control of the Channel, enabling the French emperor to ravage Britain and leave it in tatters. It was up to Nelson and his men to stop that happening.

The French Admiral Pierre Villeneuve was a man under pressure. It was under his command that the combined fleet was to sail, and it was up to him to ensure that happened. Although Nelson and his fleet lurked nearby, Villeneuve managed to sneak out of Toulon under cover of bad weather. Upon realising the admiral had moved, Nelson set off in pursuit. The French reunited with some of their ships, but they failed to take control of the Channel so fled south to Cadiz with their fleet.

Napoleon was not pleased with Villeneuve's delay and already had plans to replace him. It was a final accusation of cowardice that forced Villeneuve to leave the harbour, and as far as he knew, there was no British force nearby that could hope to best him. Unfortunately for Villeneuve, he was wrong.

When Villeneuve first made for Cadiz, Nelson had returned home, and for 25 days he had perfected his strategy. Napoleon had refocused his efforts on his Grande Armée in Austria, but in England, invasion by sea still seemed a very real possibility, and Nelson was the hero who could prevent it. On 15 September 1805, Nelson set sail on Victory again, and was very careful to keep his main fleet well out to sea. Villeneuve had no idea that what he was running into was a strategy designed to stop him for good, and a man who still had something to prove.

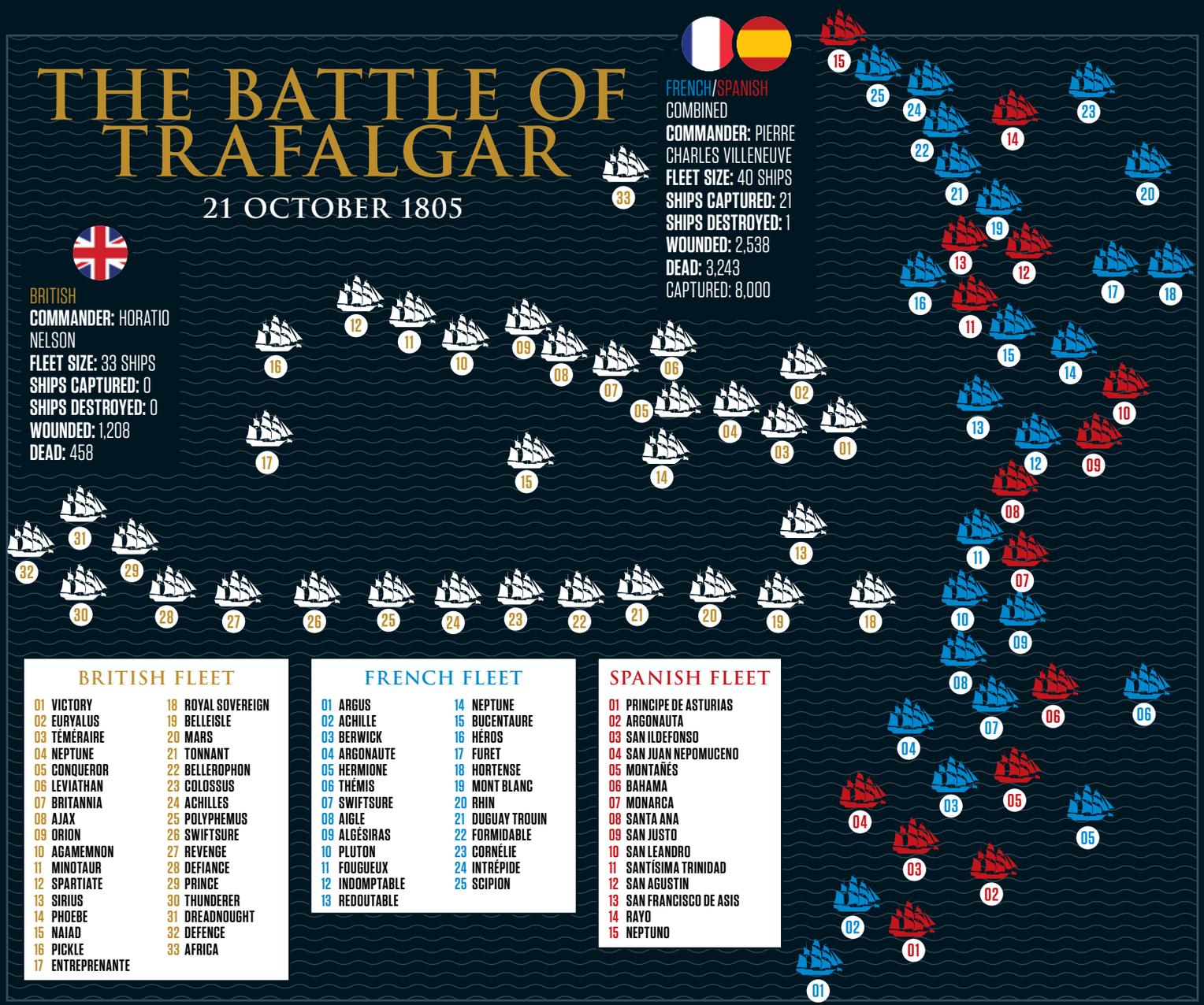
As the silhouettes of the combined fleet appeared against the sunrise over Cape Trafalgar, the British finally began to move. They split into two divisions, one led by Nelson and the other by Collingwood. On board Victory, Nelson ordered his lieutenant to carry a message to the fleet: "England expects that every man will do his duty." Nelson was many things – curious, energetic, even reckless. His adventurous spirit and quest for personal pride had led him to travel to the furthest reaches of the world, but it had been his duty that kept him there. It was this sense of duty in the face of fear and danger that Nelson instilled in his men that day.

The men had every right to be afraid. Naval tactics at the time meant that almost every battle followed a set sequence – the ships would line up against each other and attack from the broadside cannons. This strategy was such an integral part of naval warfare at the time that it had inspired the name 'ship of the line' for the vessels that took part in it. But Nelson had other plans. He would deviate from the norm, and instead of facing down the line of Villeneuve's fleet in the ordinary fashion, he would attack them from the west, at right angles, in two squadrons. This put Nelson and his men at immense risk, as they were exposed to the fleet's powerful and devastating broadside cannons, but if they could cut their way through, they could slice the fleet in three and destroy it.

The British aligned themselves into two long lines, and like two arrows fired forward. They stormed towards the combined fleet, led by the flagships. The Franco-Spanish fleet were not expecting or prepared for such a tactic. The French ship Fougueux let off a broadside towards Collingwood's Royal Sovereign as he burst through the line, but it was too late. Sovereign raked Santa Ana, the Spanish flagship, with an attack so devastating it disabled 14 guns and 400 crew members. Victory meanwhile was leading the charge towards the two ships Redoubtable and Bucentaure. With the fleet so crowded together, Victory was forced to ram the ship and fire off broadsides at point-blank range.

THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR

21 OCTOBER 1805



BRITISH
COMMANDER: HORATIO NELSON
FLEET SIZE: 33 SHIPS
SHIPS CAPTURED: 0
SHIPS DESTROYED: 0
WOUNDED: 1,208
DEAD: 458

FRENCH/SPANISH COMBINED
COMMANDER: PIERRE CHARLES VILLENEUVE
FLEET SIZE: 40 SHIPS
SHIPS CAPTURED: 21
SHIPS DESTROYED: 1
WOUNDED: 2,538
DEAD: 3,243
CAPTURED: 8,000

BRITISH FLEET

01 VICTORY
02 EURYALUS
03 TÉMÉRAIRE
04 NEPTUNE
05 CONQUEROR
06 LEVIATHAN
07 BRITANNIA
08 AJAX
09 ORION
10 AGAMEMNON
11 MINOTAUR
12 SPARTIATE
13 SIRIUS
14 PHOEBE
15 NAIAD
16 PICKLE
17 ENTREPRENANTE
18 ROYAL SOVEREIGN
19 BELLEISLE
20 MARS
21 TONNANT
22 BELLEROPHON
23 COLOSSUS
24 ACHILLES
25 POLYPHEMUS
26 SWIFTSURE
27 REVENGE
28 DEFIANCE
29 PRINCE
30 THUNDERER
31 DREADNOUGHT
32 DEFENCE
33 AFRICA

FRENCH FLEET

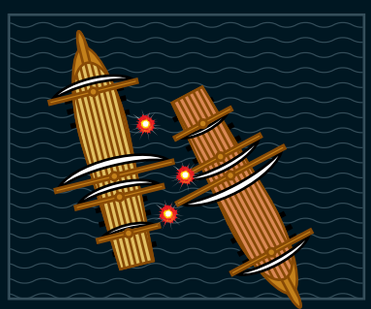
01 ARGUS
02 ACHILLE
03 BERWICK
04 ARGONAUTE
05 HERMIONE
06 THÉMIS
07 SWIFTSURE
08 AIGLE
09 ALGÉSIRAS
10 PLUTON
11 FOUGUEUX
12 INDOMPTABLE
13 REDOUTABLE
14 NEPTUNE
15 BUCENTAURE
16 HÉROS
17 FURET
18 HORTENSE
19 MONT BLANC
20 RHIN
21 DUGUAY TROUIN
22 FORMIDABLE
23 CORNÉLIE
24 INTRÉPIDE
25 SCIPION

SPANISH FLEET

01 PRINCIPE DE ASTURIAS
02 ARGONAUTA
03 SAN ILDEFONSO
04 SAN JUAN NEPOMUCENO
05 MONTAÑÉS
06 BAHAMA
07 MONARCA
08 SANTA ANA
09 SAN JUSTO
10 SAN LEANDRO
11 SANTÍSIMA TRINIDAD
12 SAN AGUSTIN
13 SAN FRANCISCO DE ASIS
14 RAYO
15 NEPTUNO

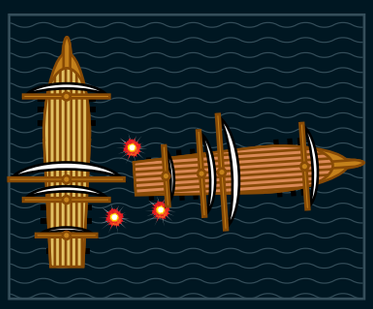
NELSON'S TACTICS

Battle at sea usually followed defined tactics, but Nelson deviated, risked everything and claimed the most decisive victory of the war



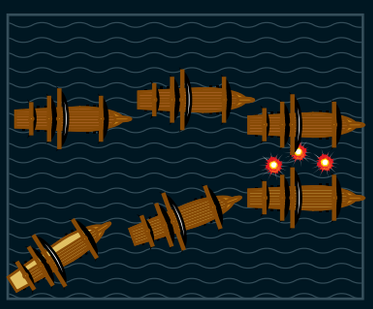
Broadside

Because it was near impossible for ships to fire over the bow or stern, all the guns were positioned along the side of the ship. Because of this, it was the captain's aim to face the side of their ships against the enemy's side and then unleash the cannons in an attack. This was known as a broadside.



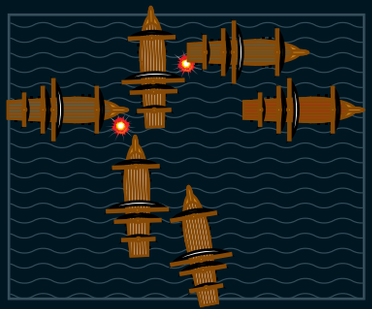
Raking

A broadside attack was powerful, but it exposed the ship to the enemy ship's fire. It was safer for the vessel to bring its broadside to the bow or stern of the enemy vessel. This meant the ship was able to fire through the entire length of the ship, while the enemy was unable to return fire. This was called 'raking'.



Traditional formation

Because the main aim of battles was to bring your ships broadside against the enemy's to unleash devastating firepower, ships would be aligned to unleash a torrent of attacks against each other. Often this resulted in two lines of ships sailing parallel and exchanging broadside over and over again.



The Nelson Touch

During the battle of Trafalgar, Nelson made the risky decision to abandon the traditional tactic and instead he attacked the fleet at right angles. His ships underwent a torrent of attacks as they approached, but when they broke through the line, they raked the enemy ships and knocked them out one by one.



NELSON'S LEGACY

We speak to Roger Knight, who in 2000 changed his career from deputy director of the National Maritime Museum to that of teacher and author. His biggest book is the award-winning *The Pursuit Of Victory: The Life And Achievement Of Horatio Nelson* (2005). This biography was translated into French in 2015, the first time that this has happened since the 19th century. In September 2016, he is publishing a study guide on Nelson in the Connell Guides series.

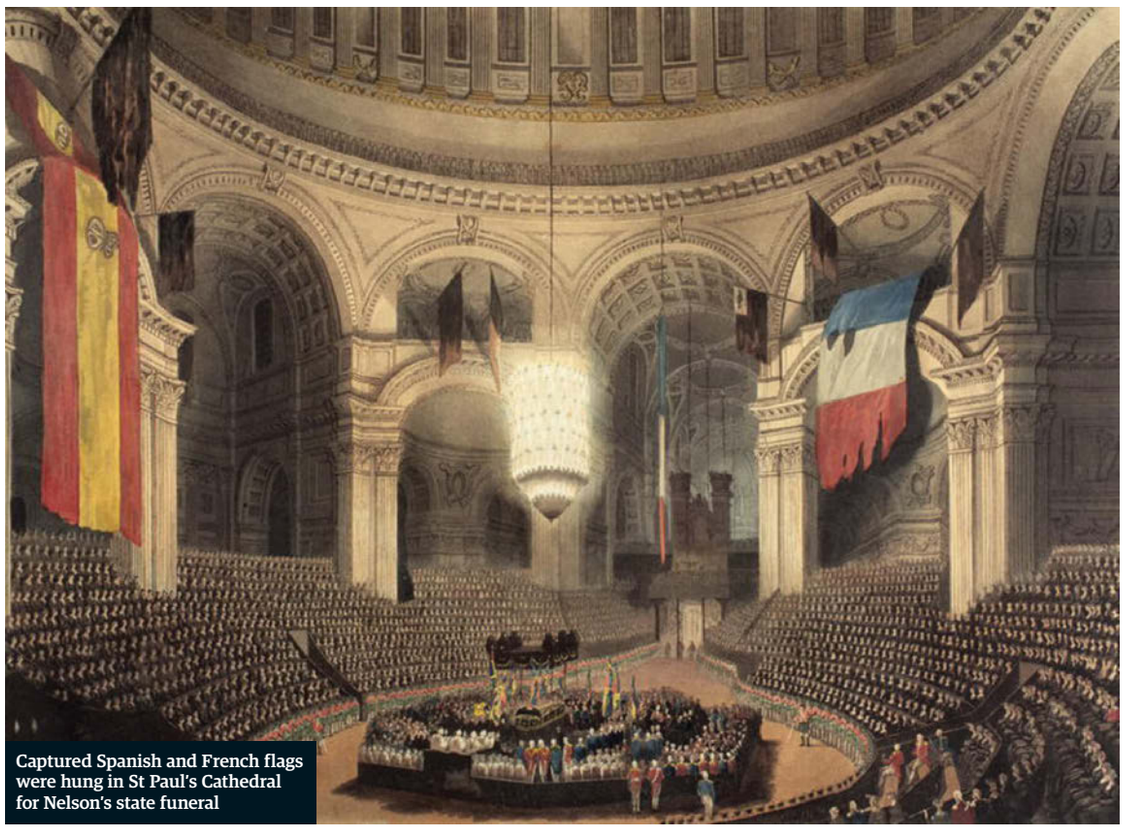
How influential is Nelson and his legacy today?

The legacy of Nelson has had a chequered history, for the straitlaced mid-Victorians did not approve of his relationship with Emma Hamilton and he was quietly dropped as a national hero. However, when the German naval threat emerged at the end of the 19th century, his heroic attributes were resurrected by those who wanted more warships to be built, and he came back into fashion.

The memory of his clear-cut victories led the British public to expect the Royal Navy to overwhelm the Germans in World War I – after the battle of Jutland in 1916, they were to be disappointed. However, the memory of his character and victories re-emerged as morale-raising propaganda during World War II. In the 21st century, the Royal Navy no longer has a worldwide role or an empire to defend and is a fraction of its mid-20th-century size. Yet Nelson's influence remains, and he is still in the first rank of national heroes. Navies around the world still study his leadership and management methods, when, most unusually for the time, he trusted and delegated responsibility downwards. One change that has taken place is that historians know much more about the officers, seamen and ships of the Georgian sailing navy, and studies of Nelson take the role of many other people and historical factors into account when writing about his victories.

Perhaps the most difficult strand of Nelson's legacy to analyse is the way in which he is still seen as the person who led the national resistance against the might of Napoleonic France. How much does his memory affect our complex relations with the continent of Europe?

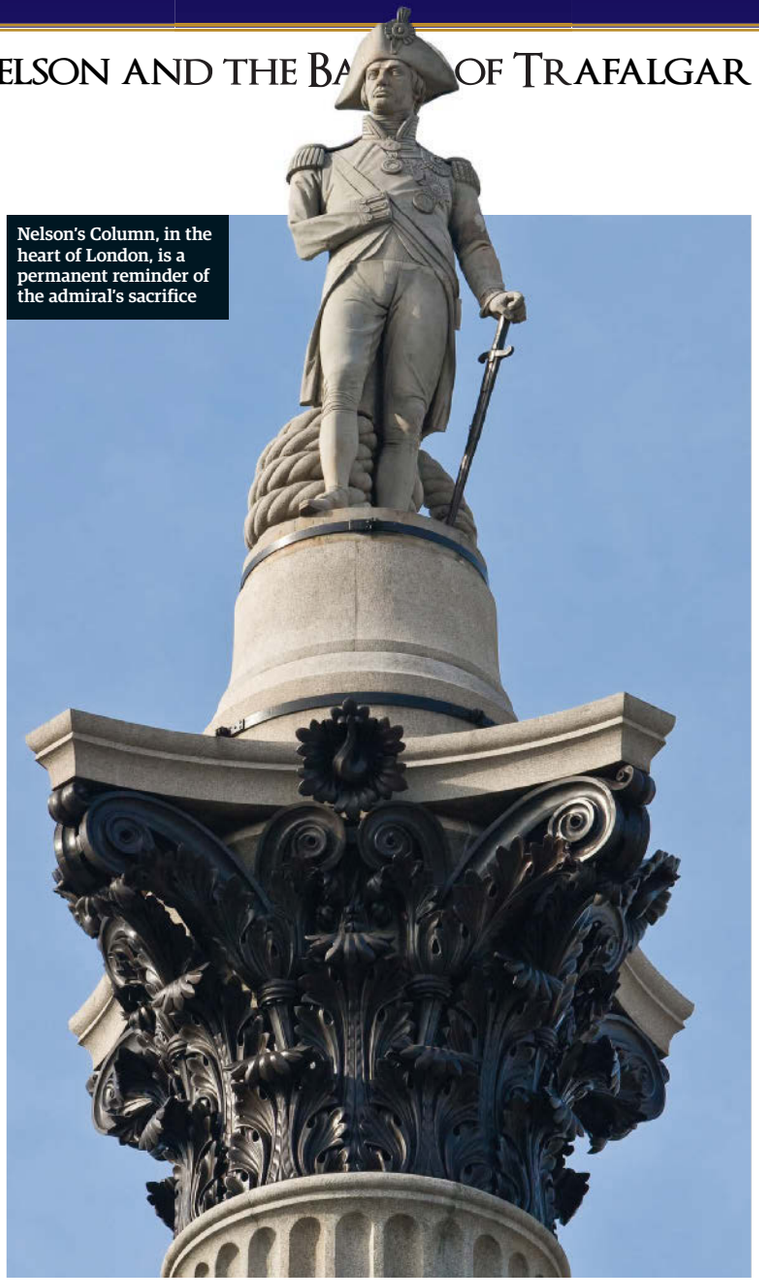




Captured Spanish and French flags were hung in St Paul's Cathedral for Nelson's state funeral



With 50 guns on each side, the crew of Victory worked tirelessly to defeat the combined fleet



Nelson's Column, in the heart of London, is a permanent reminder of the admiral's sacrifice

The situation was so dangerous that many had urged Nelson to conduct the battle from a safe distance, or at least remove the stars of honour gleaming on his coat. Nelson refused. He had come close to death many times before, but he was convinced that he would meet his end at Trafalgar. He had already said farewell to his friends and family, and if he was going to die, he was going to go out with his medals on his chest.

French sailors in the rigging of Redoubtable were already picking off men exposed on Victory's deck. Minutes before Nelson himself was shot, a man standing beside him was blown in half by a cannon ball, but Nelson did not move. Whether it was for pride, bravado or courage, Nelson remained on the deck of his ship. Shortly after 1pm, a musket shot hit Nelson, throwing him to the deck floor and shattering his spine. Still calling out instructions to his crew, he was carried below and examined by a surgeon, who confirmed death was imminent.

Despite his injuries and suffering immense pain, Nelson constantly asked for updates on the battle. Before he died, he was informed that the British fleet had taken 15 enemy ships. Nelson's dangerous tactic had worked; he knew he had won. As he drew his last breath, his beloved flag captain Hardy kissed his forehead and Nelson uttered his final words: "Now I am satisfied. Thank God, I have done my duty." Nelson had never desired a long, comfortable life, he was a master of the seas and a seeker of adventure. As he left this world with the news of his greatest victory ringing in his ears, he departed it, finally, with pride.

Nelson's fatal injury caused him to miss the climax of the battle, where three British ships battered the French flagship Bucentaure into submission, and Villeneuve was forced to surrender. All around British ships were tearing holes into the combined fleet, at great loss of life. The French ship Achille refused to surrender, and was blown up with everyone on board. By the end of the battle, the British had suffered 1,666 casualties, while the combined fleet's casualties numbered near 14,000. France and Spain lost approximately 21 ships in the battle, while Britain lost none. Napoleon's plans to invade were well and truly thwarted.

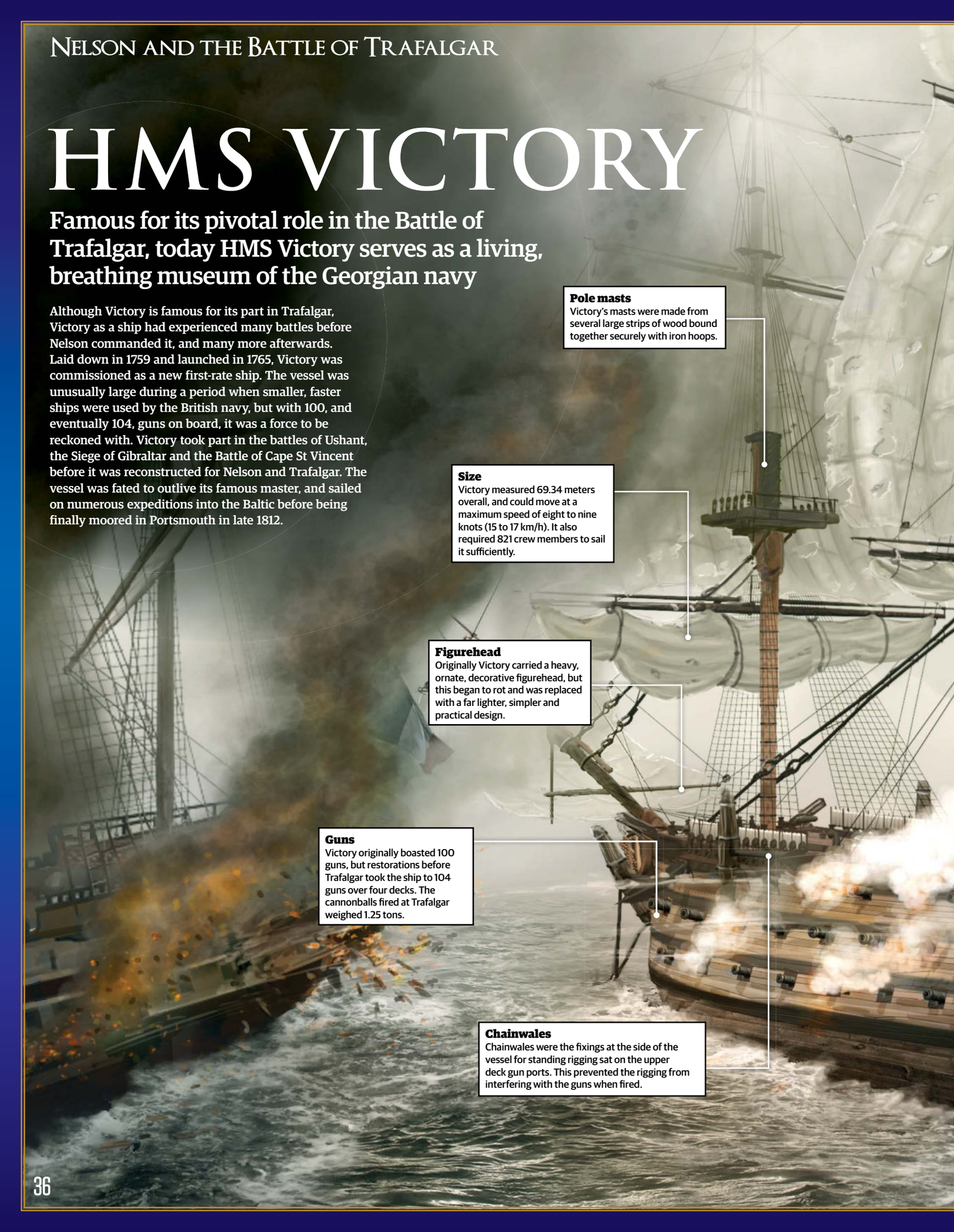
The victory at Trafalgar had cemented British dominance of the sea, a mastery that would go unchallenged for ten more years of war, and more than 100 years of worldwide naval domination. However, this victory was completely overshadowed in England by the news of Nelson's death. He had been the nation's hero before he departed, and when his body was returned, he was their martyr. Nelson's body was preserved for the journey back in a cask of rum, as the admiral had requested a land burial. He was honoured with a magnificent state funeral at St Paul's Cathedral, and his popularity soared. His image was carved into countless statues and monuments, streets were named after him, and his flagship was painstakingly preserved, surviving today as the oldest naval ship still in commission.

Nelson's rise from a small, sickly child to the greatest and most beloved war hero in British history is unlikely to ever be repeated. He remains a key part of British identity, and his famous column resides at the heart of the capital. The man himself has taken on an almost god-like status, a source of pride, duty and bravery. But he was also a man who was led by a desire to prove himself, who suffered with self doubt. Perhaps this is Nelson and Britain's greatest achievement, not a naval victory, but the willpower and bravery to sail against the winds of uncertainty and fear, and to overcome.

HMS Victory

Famous for its pivotal role in the Battle of Trafalgar, today HMS Victory serves as a living, breathing museum of the Georgian navy

Although Victory is famous for its part in Trafalgar, Victory as a ship had experienced many battles before Nelson commanded it, and many more afterwards. Laid down in 1759 and launched in 1765, Victory was commissioned as a new first-rate ship. The vessel was unusually large during a period when smaller, faster ships were used by the British navy, but with 100, and eventually 104, guns on board, it was a force to be reckoned with. Victory took part in the battles of Ushant, the Siege of Gibraltar and the Battle of Cape St Vincent before it was reconstructed for Nelson and Trafalgar. The vessel was fated to outlive its famous master, and sailed on numerous expeditions into the Baltic before being finally moored in Portsmouth in late 1812.



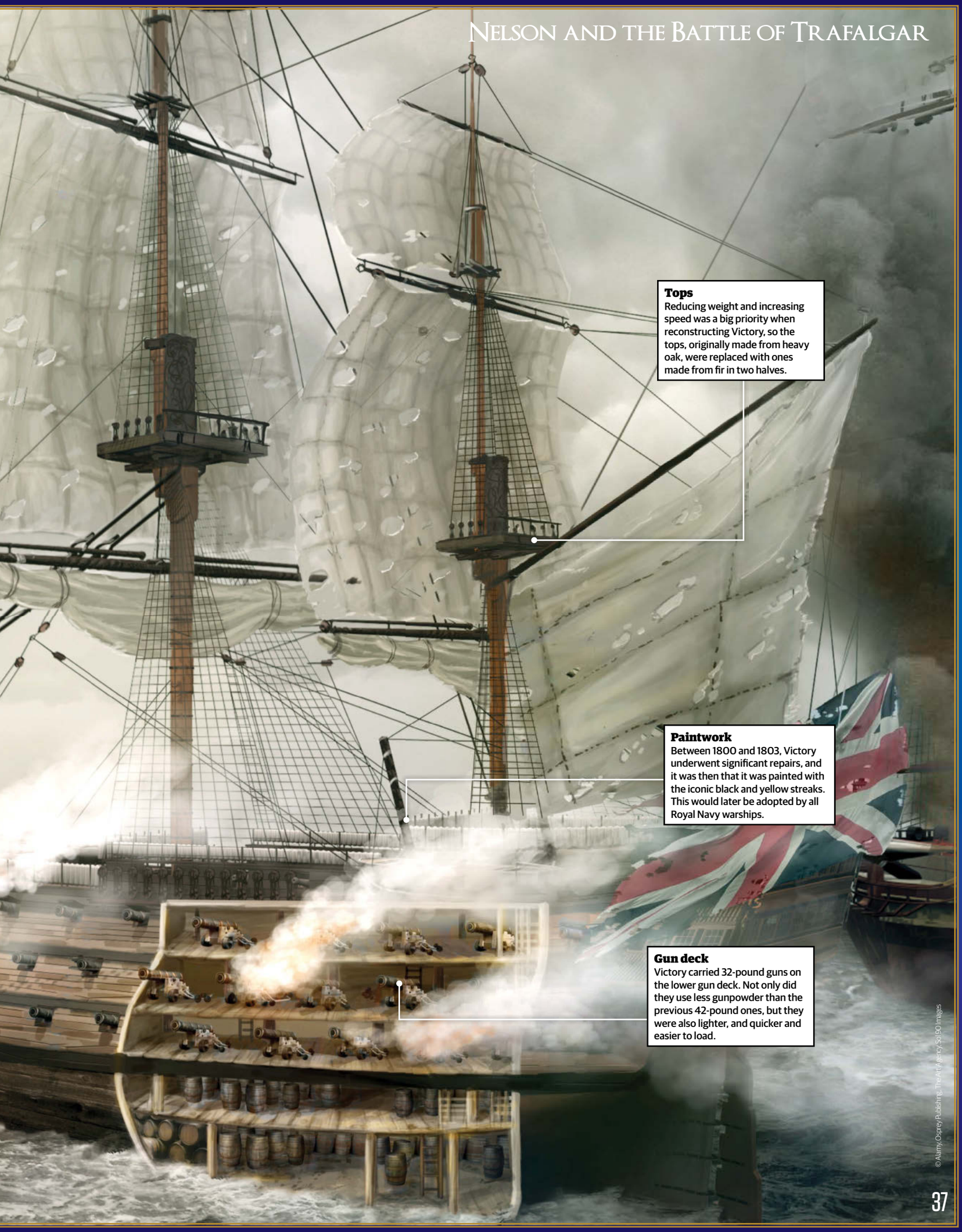
Pole masts
Victory's masts were made from several large strips of wood bound together securely with iron hoops.

Size
Victory measured 69.34 meters overall, and could move at a maximum speed of eight to nine knots (15 to 17 km/h). It also required 821 crew members to sail it sufficiently.

Figurehead
Originally Victory carried a heavy, ornate, decorative figurehead, but this began to rot and was replaced with a far lighter, simpler and practical design.

Guns
Victory originally boasted 100 guns, but restorations before Trafalgar took the ship to 104 guns over four decks. The cannonballs fired at Trafalgar weighed 1.25 tons.

Chainwales
Chainwales were the fixings at the side of the vessel for standing rigging sat on the upper deck gun ports. This prevented the rigging from interfering with the guns when fired.



Tops
Reducing weight and increasing speed was a big priority when reconstructing Victory, so the tops, originally made from heavy oak, were replaced with ones made from fir in two halves.

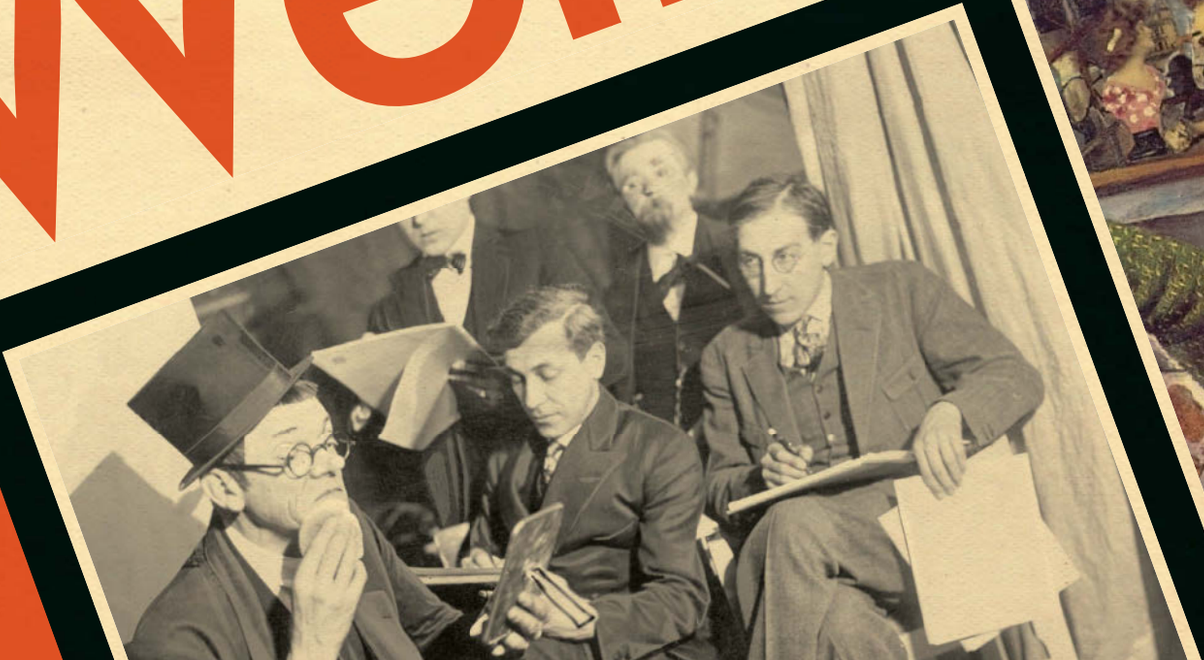
Paintwork
Between 1800 and 1803, Victory underwent significant repairs, and it was then that it was painted with the iconic black and yellow streaks. This would later be adopted by all Royal Navy warships.

Gun deck
Victory carried 32-pound guns on the lower gun deck. Not only did they use less gunpowder than the previous 42-pound ones, but they were also lighter, and quicker and easier to load.

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The wild ride of the Weimar









Republic

Written by Jack Griffiths

How Germany's ambitious 14-year democratic society lurched from rich cultural prosperity to disastrous economic crashes and political extremism

Inter-war Germany is remembered most as the breeding ground in which the seeds of Hitler's evil were sown. However, there is much more to this era than just a precursor to the rise of a megalomaniac. On 9 November 1918, two days before the guns finally fell silent on the Western Front, Germany's monarch Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and fled to the Netherlands. He believed that by doing this he had, "...sacrificed myself and my throne in the belief that, by so doing, I was best serving the interests of my beloved Fatherland."

Causing a power vacuum, anarchy was unleashed onto the streets as the German Empire crumbled. The resulting German Revolution caused months of unrest, and these outbreaks of violence were an indication of just how disjointed society was and would continue to be. After the leftist defeat in the Spartacist uprising, a constitution was drawn up in January 1919 by new chancellor Friedrich Ebert and the ruling party the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD). A new democratic system was born and it was to be known as the Weimar Republic.

But even at the height of its golden years there was dissention running through Weimar society. This friction would come to a head during frequent bouts of economic mayhem during an era that was a hotbed of inflation, strained international relations, putsches and rich culture. The Weimar political experiment may have ended with Hitler's tyrannical rule, but it remains one of the most remarkable periods of 20th-century history.



Turmoil 1919-23

A diverse era defined by unpayable reparations, war guilt and a new-found cultural freedom

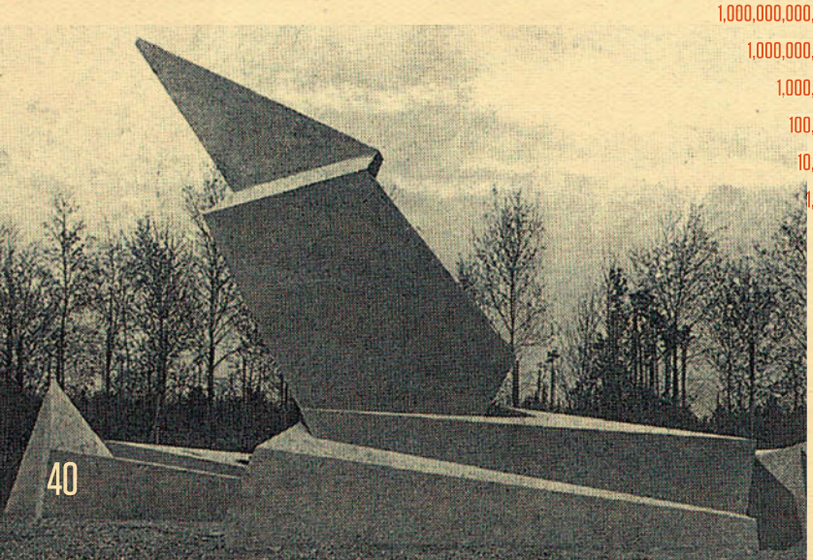


Culture

With the empire now a thing of the past, the German people seized the opportunity to embrace their freedom

The German capital Berlin quickly established itself as one of the cultural centres of the world, a remarkable achievement considering the capitulation of the war effort only a few years previously. There were new opportunities for women across the nation, who had gained access to some modern forms of birth-control technology. New ideas in art also came to the forefront especially at the Bauhaus, a school of design and architecture opened in the town of Weimar in 1919. However, violence continued to break out in the streets and political instability endured. This era of culture and entertainment became a way for the Weimar Germans to tolerate the troubles, and helped them get through the unstable early years of the republic despite shortages of food and cash.

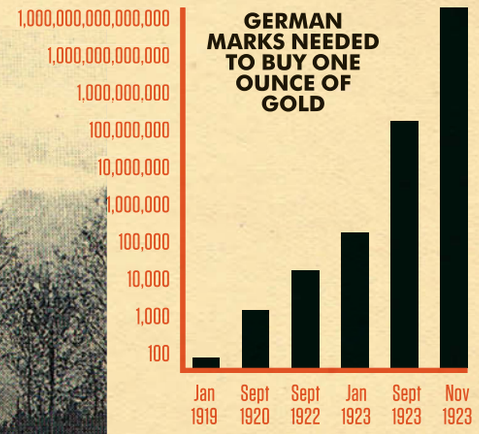
Berlin played a huge role in this new cultural expression, but it was in Munich that the roots of the most famous type of Weimar culture took hold: cabaret. Although the culture had existed in Germany since the turn of the century, it was only fully revived in the 1920s. The avant-garde role of 'Kabarett' in society only increased as the golden years of the Weimar Republic emerged.



Economics

From immense reparation payments to massive hyperinflation, German economics were stuck in the post-war doldrums

As most of the fighting on the Western Front took place on the fields of France and Belgium, Germany benefited from a mostly unscathed Ruhr, the country's industrial heartland. This all changed, however, with the Treaty of Versailles, which crippled Germany. In 1921, the nation barely managed to pay the first of the yearly reparations of 2 billion gold marks and had to pay a large part in coal, iron and wood rather than actual monies. By 1922, however, it was clear this was not a feasible system, and hyperinflation set in. With the Papiermark becoming more worthless by the day, people hoarded notes in wheelbarrows and rushed to spend them before prices soared again. Hyperinflation was damaging the fledgling Weimar Republic, so in stepped Gustav Stresemann. The new chancellor, appointed in August 1923, ordered workers to return to the Ruhr and set about stabilising the country. With a new currency, the Rentenmark, and a loan from the USA of $200 million under the Dawes Plan, Weimar Germany was able to get back on its feet.



Politics

With the kaiser gone, a new type of politics emerged in the young republic

Friedrich Ebert was elected president in February 1919. Emerging from the shadow of Kaiser Wilhelm II's rule, the Weimar Republic was the phoenix from the flames of war. Ebert was officially handed power by Reichskanzler Prince Max von Baden and, with Germany now split into federal states called Länders, each was given control over its own affairs but ultimately answering to a centralised government housed in the Reichstag in Berlin. The Weimar Republic utilised a system of proportional representation, and all people over the age of 20 were eligible to vote. This meant a number of small parties held a stake in government affairs and no party had an overall majority. This prevented any party taking complete control.

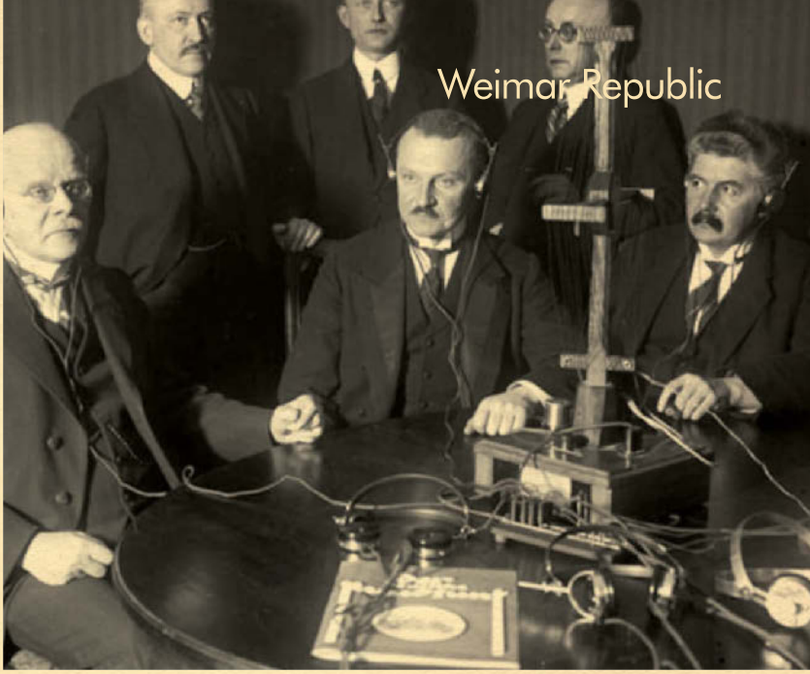
The first major threat to Weimar Germany came in the form of the Kapp Putsch of 1920. A right-wing revolt led by civil servant and journalist Wolfgang Kapp, the attacks were directed at Ebert as the rebels believed he and the Treaty of Versailles had failed the country. The Weimar president left Berlin and fled to Dresden, where he ordered a general strike to be undertaken in the capital. This decision was a masterstroke, as it paralysed the once-threatening uprising and it only lasted a total of five days. Ebert was also lucky that in 1918 he had brokered the Ebert-Groener pact with the German army, which meant there was no danger of the military overthrowing the government. The deal made him unpopular with socialists, who saw the armed forces as the enemy of the revolution, and the deal ensured the army would continue to meddle with political affairs through the years of the republic.



Friedrich Ebert

4 February 1871 – 28 February 1925

The first president of the Weimar Republic was instrumental in bringing about the new constitution. Ebert led Germany through political turmoil but has been criticised for including the armed forces too much. His reputation eventually succumbed to the financial crisis and he died in office.



International relations

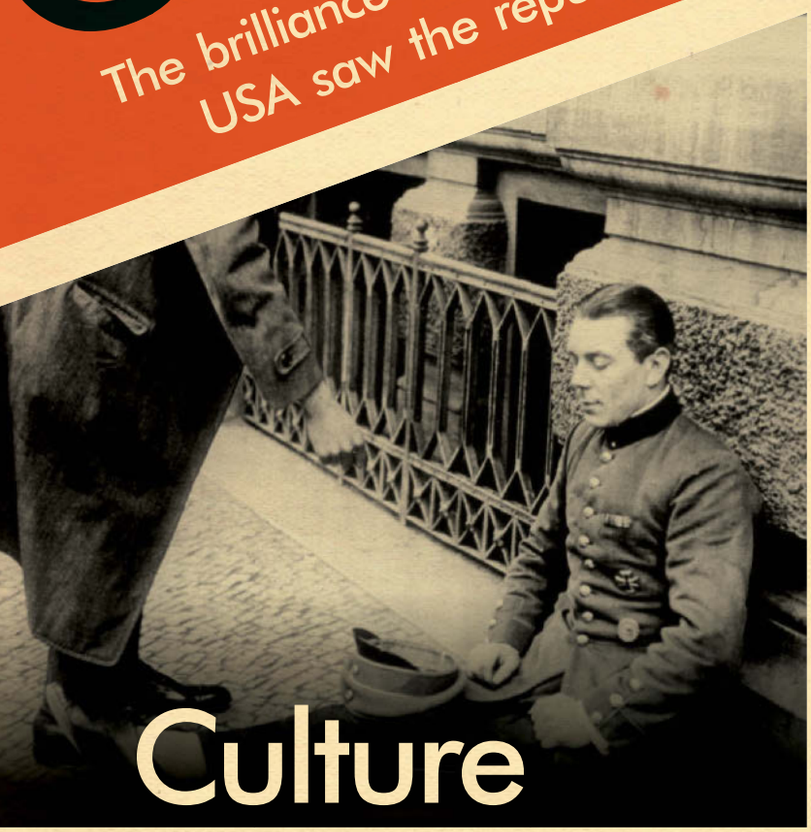
Would the former Allied powers go easy on the defeated Germany or milk their past foe for all it was worth?

It seemed as if the entire world was on Germany's back. After the government couldn't scrape together another reparation payment, France and Belgium took it upon themselves to invade the Ruhr in 1923, the core of Germany's industrial might. Steel factories, coal mines and railroads were taken over by 60,000 aggressors and any workers who resisted were imprisoned. The resources owed as part of the reparations would now be forcibly extracted. This broke the rules set out by the League of Nations and demonstrated the weakness of the organisation. The two year occupation resulted in the expulsion of 150,000 Germans from the Ruhr and was a huge knock to the Weimar economy, as the government instructed the workers in the area to go on strike and then resorted to printing money to cover the costs, partly causing the hyperinflation that would ravage the country.

The Allies were tempted to sit back and watch as the old enemy imploded on itself, but eventually saw the bigger picture. Communist Russia was beginning to be seen as the biggest ideological threat to the USA, Britain and France, so along with Italy and Belgium, the Dawes Committee was created to help the Weimar Republic rise again. Negotiations saw the French and Belgians soon leave the Ruhr, and Germany's national bank, the Reichsbank, was closely monitored by the group of former World War I allies. The long-term goals were still unknown, but in the short term, the Weimar Republic had benefited from the generosity of its past enemies.

Golden era 1924-29

The brilliance of Stresemann and the lenience of the USA saw the republic experience its greatest age



Culture

Bolstered by the economic upturn, filmmakers and actors oversaw the rise of cabaret and German cinema

In the golden years of the Weimar Republic, cabaret ruled the roost. New styles of music and dance were introduced under a more modern-thinking regime and Berlin, Munich and other major cities in Germany became party capitals. In Berlin's Nollendorfplatz and Wintergarten theatre in particular, restaurants and bars stayed open deep into the night among a backdrop of lewd humour and political satire. Berlin also welcomed the Bauhaus, which had been moved from Weimar and would become a major influence on the development of 20th-century European art. Cabaret may have primarily been a form of entertainment but it also used its popularity to political effect. Serious issues were dissected with cabaret encouraging people to analyse why things were as they were and how life could be made better. The aim was to remove the nationalist rhetoric preached during the days of empire while also protecting from a Bolshevik revolution as seen in Russia. The Germans knew this prosperity was temporary but made the most of the booming culture in the golden years before depression and extremism set in.

Economics

A change in currency and a practical grand coalition helped Weimar become a workable system of government

This era of prosperity was kick-started by the economic brilliance of Stresemann and the willingness of the USA to come to the negotiating table. Reduced payments were in place until 1929 as inflation ceased to be a problem and the economic situation stabilised. The government strictly prevented the printing of money and the amount of currency in circulation. In 1924, the Rentenmark was replaced by the Reichsmark and taxes on large companies were increased to enable the government to reinvest more wealth. This was all done under the Grand Coalition led by Stresemann and driven by the talented Finance Minister Hjalmar Schacht. It wasn't all plain sailing though, and unemployment was still on the rise and there was a worsening of living conditions, which meant the situation briefly became worse than pre-war levels. The most unsustainable issue of all though was the reliance of overseas loans.

The appearance of sound economic conditions meant that during the golden years, the voices of extremist parties were silenced and democracy in the Weimar Republic could finally prosper. Living conditions did suffer but society also benefited from new roads, public buildings and schools that were constructed with this newly available wealth. As the golden years went on, things changed and wages rose nationwide and industrial output doubled by 1929. Finally the Weimar Republic had reached a period of stability, but it was not to last. The American money was simply paper over the cracks and events across the Atlantic would cause more, and this time lasting, turmoil.





Politics

Dissent was kept under wraps but extremism bubbled under the surface

The cultural boom was criticised by both the far left and far right of the political spectrum. The left saw it as an example of the wastefulness of capitalism while the right pointed to it as evidence of weak central government. All of this dissent had, for now, a minimal threat though, and with Hitler's confinement in Landsberg Prison in 1923, the biggest menace to democracy had been temporarily nullified. Perhaps most significantly, extremist parties had been officially banned, but this did not stop the likes of the KPD and NSPD building underground support bases.

The political problems within the republic arose from the fact that despite the economic recovery and cultural shift, not much was altered at the top of the pile. The series of coalitions were moderate and pro-democracy but were also minority governments and political leadership changed hands frequently. The election of war hero Paul von Hindenburg in 1925 as president was a sign of things to come. A powerful figure, he was a well-known sympathiser of right-wing politics. With the death of Stresemann in 1929, the political situation quickly became unstable once again.

COALITION

KPD
Formed out of the Spartacist Uprising, the KPD were anti-Weimar and had a particular distaste for the SPD.
Pros: Strong links to Moscow.
Cons: Not willing to work within the Weimar Republic framework.

USPD
The Independent Socialist Party broke from the SPD in 1917 after a disagreement over Germany's continued participation in World War I.
Pros: Trade union support.
Cons: Damaging internal conflict.

SPD
Strongly anti-communist, the SPD was a moderate socialist party and the largest in the republic.
Pros: Strong, deep-rooted party.
Cons: Proportional representation prevented them gaining a majority.

DDP
A middle-class liberal party who faded from any sort of powerful position as the republic went on.
Pros: Supported League of Nations and the Weimar constitution.
Cons: Gained just one per cent of the vote in 1932.

CENTRE PARTY (Z)
Also known as the Zentrum Party, it was involved in every Weimar Coalition until the coming of the NSDAP in 1933.
Pros: Support from all classes.
Cons: Tied to the rules of the Catholic Church.

DVP
The German People's Party was a monarchist group that achieved highs of 14 per cent of the vote in 1920.
Pros: Gustav Stresemann was their leader.
Cons: The party's later devotion to far-right ideals.

DNVP
A party that supported the old monarchy, their right-wing views meant they were the closest politically to the Nazis.
Pros: Strong rural and Protestant support.
Cons: Absorbed into the NSDAP in 1933.

NSDAP
The NSDAP initially tried to overthrow the republic but changed to a legal approach after the failed Munich Putsch.
Pros: Apparent strong and dynamic vision for Germany.
Cons: Adolf Hitler's (then unknown) twisted mind.

International relations

Relations with France smoothed as Germany becomes a trusted international player

The USA was eager for Germany to continue paying its reparations as this helped Paris and London finance what they owed to the US. It was also hoped it would encourage Germany to embrace capitalism and not lurch to the ideas of communism. To aid the smooth running of this process, the USA organised an international committee to keep tabs on Weimar's financial situation. Charles Dawes was at the head of this group and enacted the Dawes Plan in April 1924, which was a loan agreement to Germany totalling 800 million Marks. This was followed by France and Belgium removing their troops from the Ruhr under the Treaty of Locarno. Two years later, Germany joined the League of Nations and was seemingly on the road to becoming a leading and respected nation on the international stage once again. By 1929, Germany's exports were 34 per cent higher than they had been in 1913 and all seemed rosy.

The Dawes Plan was a huge relief to the financially stricken Weimar state. However, it was clear the plan was far too reliant on loans, and the German people knew this, splashing the cash on cabaret shows and other cultural pursuits. Germany was now almost completely dependant on the USA, so the Young Plan was formulated in 1929 to rectify this. Its system of annual payments over a 59-year period seemed sustainable, but before it was given a chance to prove itself, the Wall Street Crash hit in 1929, and it hit hard.





Gustav Stresemann
10 May 1878 – 3 October 1929

Stresemann was simply one of the most important men to grace the Weimar Republic. Serving as foreign minister and chancellor, he is credited with restoring Germany's international reputation. He was instrumental in the Dawes Plan and was determined to put Germany in a healthy position domestically and internationally.





Doorway to fun, 1925

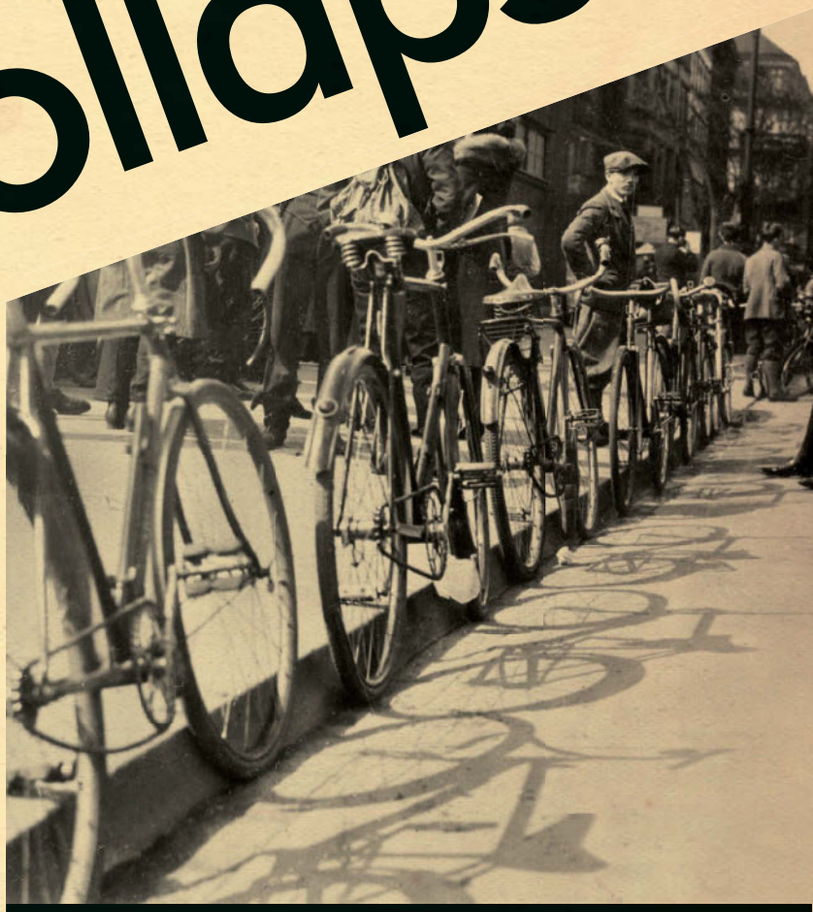
People mill around the entrance to a cabaret show in Weimar Germany. All forms of public criticism had been censored during the Kaiser's rule, but after the fall of the Empire, 'kabarett' artists were able to deal with social and political themes. It was during the 1920s that cabaret really blossomed in Germany.

© Alamy, Getty Images, Mary Evans

Weimar collapse 1930-33

The last years of the republic saw the death of democracy and political reason





Economics

How did the Weimar Republic respond to the worst economic downturn of all time?

The Wall Street Crash of 1929 may have occurred in downtown Manhattan but its shockwaves were still felt in Berlin. The death of Gustav Stresemann that year was a further blow to the German economy, and the depression hit the country especially hard because of its reliance on American aid after the economic reparations sanctioned under Versailles. Both the Dawes and Young Plans helped sustain the flagging German economy, so whatever happened to the USA financially had a direct impact on the Weimar Republic. Now in a perilous situation itself, the USA gave Germany a 90-day ultimatum to reinject the money into American coffers. Predictably, there was no way in which the Germans could repay this sort of capital, and other world powers were naturally experiencing financial problems of their own so were unable to bail out the Weimar government. The US loans were removed and industrial production fell to 58 per cent of what it was in 1928.

The results were devastating. Only six years after hyperinflation, families were once again hit hard as the number of unemployed rose to 6.1 million. Chancellor Franz von Papen gave a speech on economics explaining the situation in which Germany found itself in June 1932. He condemned the high level of interest and taxation as well as the reliance on foreign debt. Although everything he said was correct, at this point, talk was cheap and it was obvious to all that the Weimar Republic was fast becoming unsustainable. Something had to give economically and, ultimately, politically.

Culture

The Reichstag may have been in chaos but Weimar culture was as rich as ever

The Weimar artistic notion of Neue Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity) continued into the 1930s. The public was still highly cynical of the effects of World War I and this was best expressed in Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel *All Quiet On The Western Front*. Kurt Tucholsky was another famous writer who authored chansons that were sung all over Germany. Influenced by these songs, playwright Bertolt Brecht used his work to help promote the ideas of a new art movement known as Dadaism and preach artistic expression against the elite. As well as art and theatre, film was beginning to take off. Films such as *Der blaue Engel* (The Blue Angel) and *Der Kongress tanzt* (The Congress Dances) were released in the early 1930s, but their popularity suffered due to an influx of movies from Hollywood, and their creative flair was removed completely when Hitler came to power. The Nazis targeted renowned cabaret performers in their attempts to create their Volksgemeinschaft. Many were left with no option but to flee the country or accept the cultural shackles of the Third Reich. Now only 'positive cabaret' was allowed, which painted the National Socialists in a positive light.

Politics

In three years of struggle, the Reichstag bickered its way towards extremism

After the resignation of Hermann Müller in March 1930, Heinrich Brüning of the Zentrum Party was entrusted with leading Germany out of the quagmire. Brüning's tactic was to increase taxation, decrease unemployment benefits and impose high tariffs on imports. Despite his best efforts, all these measures were unsuccessful and extremist parties were now a more viable option than ever before. This was proven when 107 Nazi and 77 Communist Party members were elected to the German parliament in September 1930. The KPD under the leadership of Ernst Thälmann was the largest communist movement outside the USSR and was always met with apprehension by the rest of the political spectrum. Conversely, the NSDAP were now genuinely seen as a feasible party to lead the nation. Hitler's courting of wealthy industrialists seemed to pay off as media mogul Alfred Hugenberg, himself a member of the DNVP, supported the Nazis with huge donations. Hugenberg, along with other prominent industrialists, created a collaboration of right-wing nationalists called the Harzburg Front in 1931 to persuade Hindenburg to dispose of Brüning.

The Harzburg Front was a failure, and the relationship between Hitler and Hugenberg broke down and Hindenburg refused to budge. However, the deepening social and economic problems in the country meant the end was nigh for democracy. Brüning had lost so much ground in his own parliament that he was now reliant on emergency decrees being issued by Hindenburg. He resigned, and after two short-lived cabinets under Franz von Papen and Kurt von Schleicher, Hitler became chancellor.





Paul von Hindenburg

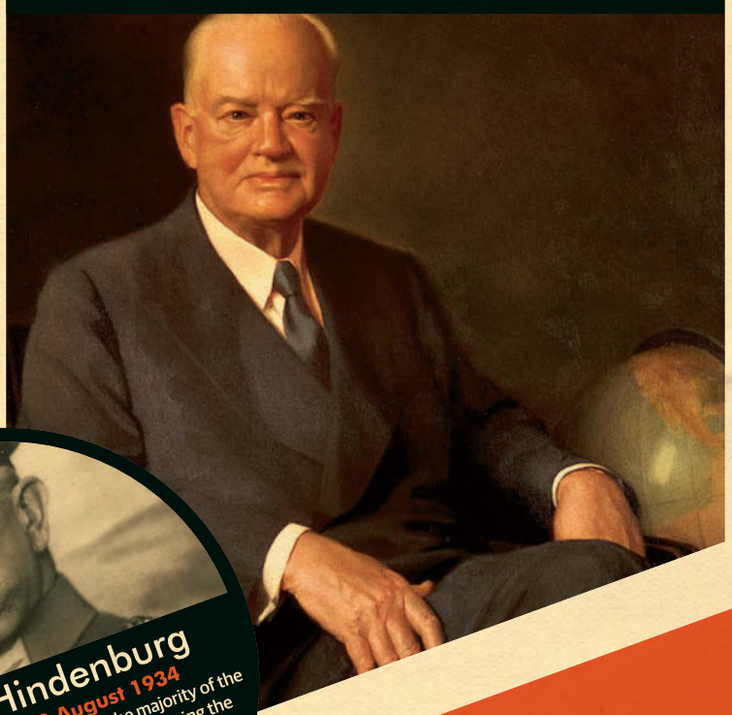
2 October 1847 – 2 August 1934

A famous war hero, Hindenburg avoided the majority of the blame for his country's capitulation in WWI. During the Brüning cabinet, he ensured every act passed required his signature. He reclaimed the presidency ahead of Hitler in 1932 but was easily influenced by the Nazis. In 1933, he made his gravest mistake as he chose Hitler as his chancellor.

International relations

With the USA pulling funds, the Weimar Republic was left to fend for itself

In August 1929, the *Chicago Tribune* described Germany as, "The most modern nation in Europe." However, tragedy struck with the Wall Street Crash. Having been so reliant on the USA, the Weimar economy was pulled down with it. Companies went bankrupt and banks folded across Germany. The economy was simply not ready for a financial disaster of this magnitude. Industrial production fell by 40 per cent, significantly higher than the 29 per cent and 14 per cent in France and Britain respectively. As the major powers looked inwards to try to fix the economic situation, they turned a blind eye to Germany, where ideas of nationalism, fascism and other far-right politics were brewing. The collapse of German and Austrian banks sent panic through Europe. In response, country after country withdrew money from the Reichsbank and $2 billion worth of gold was lost. In 1931, US President Herbert Hoover suspended reparations in an attempt to give Germany some respite. Between February and July 1932, what would be the final League of Nations disarmament conference met in Geneva with 60 nations in attendance. The request made by the League was to give up all aggression, but France and Germany could not come to an agreement over the sizes of their armed forces. It was a deathblow to the association.



Time Traveller's Handbook

THE REIGN OF TERROR

France, 1793-94

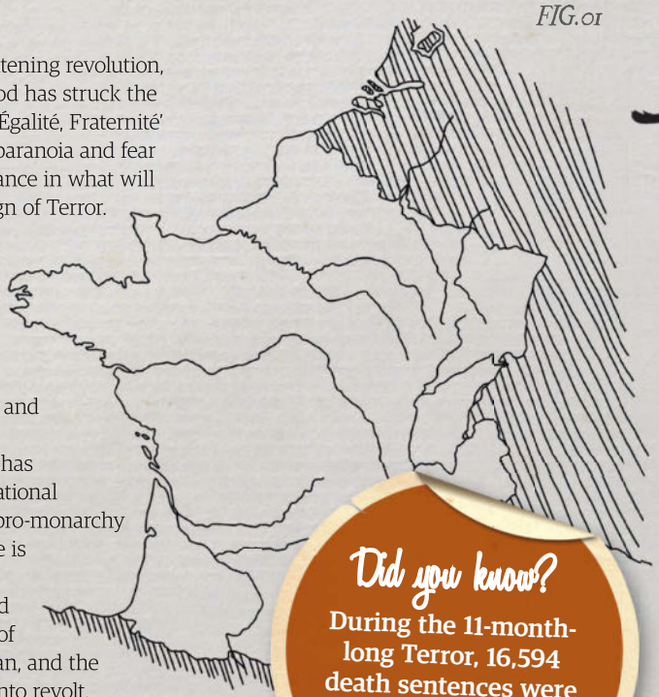
In the wake of the enlightening revolution, a new, more sinister mood has struck the streets of Paris. 'Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité' is gone, crushed by the paranoia and fear that has swept through France in what will become known as the Reign of Terror.

With the climax of the French Revolution nothing more than a distant memory, France has embraced a new government, which begins imposing new laws and implementing reforms.

However, the revolution has devastated France's international relations. At war with the pro-monarchy Austria and Prussia, France is experiencing devastating losses, which has infuriated French citizens. Murmurs of discontent once again began, and the French have been stirred into revolt.

To appease the people, in came Robespierre – but his reign is destined to fail. Intent on morality throughout France, his time in power will become synonymous with fear and murder as the Reign of Terror begins.

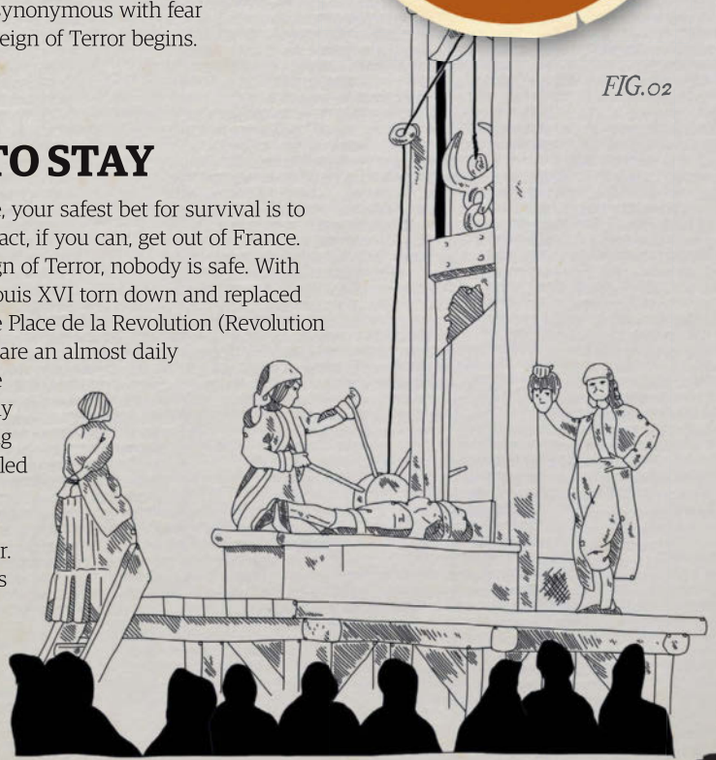
FIG.01



Did you know?

During the 11-month-long Terror, 16,594 death sentences were passed across the whole of France

FIG.02



WHERE TO STAY

If you value your life, your safest bet for survival is to get out of Paris – in fact, if you can, get out of France. In Robespierre's Reign of Terror, nobody is safe. With the statue of King Louis XVI torn down and replaced by a guillotine in the Place de la Revolution (Revolution Square), beheadings are an almost daily occurrence. With the nobility fleeing, many countries are opening their arms to the exiled bourgeoisie. It's not just the nobility that need to fear, however. Nearly three-quarters of peasants will find themselves accused of hoarding, evading the draft or committing rebellion.

Dos & Don'ts

✓ **Stay loyal to the republic.**
If you are even suspected of supporting federalism, you risk losing your head to the guillotine.

✓ **Get out of Paris.**
If possible, leave France until the revolution has died down. Out of the city you'll be away from the murderous revolutionaries itching for the kill.

✓ **Lose any titles you might have.**
Get rid of any links you have to the royal family, or any royalists that you might know. Robespierre firmly believes anyone who is with the nobility is against the 'people', and for this they deserve to lose their heads.

✓ **Join up to the National Guard, if you can.**
It's a uniform, which will keep you warm, while providing you with food, shelter and maybe even an income.

✗ **Hoard grain.**
With the sale price of grain capped, you may be tempted to hoard any you can get your hands on to avoid making a loss. However, this is a crime for which many will lose their heads.

✗ **Express any form of anti-revolutionary sentiment.**
With the revolution in full swing and gaining momentum, it'd be enough to make you lose your head.

✗ **Boast about your wealth.**
If you've got money, don't let people know, or you'll be branded bourgeois and could well meet a sticky end.

✗ **Practice Christianity.**
After the enactment of the Revolutionary Calendar, all clergymen and women will be deported and worship, in public or private, outlawed.

WHO TO BEFRIEND

Duke of Brunswick

Having declared an edict known as the Brunswick Manifesto, this Prussian noble is the closest thing you'll get to an ally during Robespierre's Reign of Terror. He has proclaimed that if the revolutionists hurt the French king or his family, the Prussian army will invade and destroy Paris. He might not be fighting for the peasants, but he's determined to put the French revolutionaries in their place and to bring back some semblance of order to France once more.

Extra tip:
Don't trust anyone. Nobody is safe from Robespierre's Reign of Terror. With executions taking place almost daily, anyone will give you up to stay on the right side of Robespierre. It doesn't matter whether you're guilty or not.

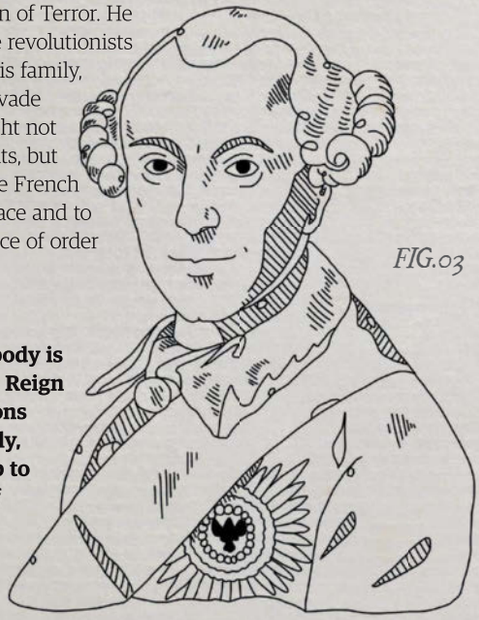


FIG.03

WHO TO AVOID

Maximilien Robespierre

Announced as the president of the reformed Committee of Public Safety, Maximilien Robespierre has been tasked with bringing the nation of France to order and eliminating enemies of the newly republic state. Exactly who these enemies are, however, is open to debate – anyone and everyone is under scrutiny. As time goes by and the Terror takes hold of Paris, Robespierre will become increasingly suspicious. Paranoid and powerful, Robespierre's hit list grows from enemies to allies and beyond. Ultimately, Robespierre will become his own downfall, succumbing to the guillotine that he so infamously admired.

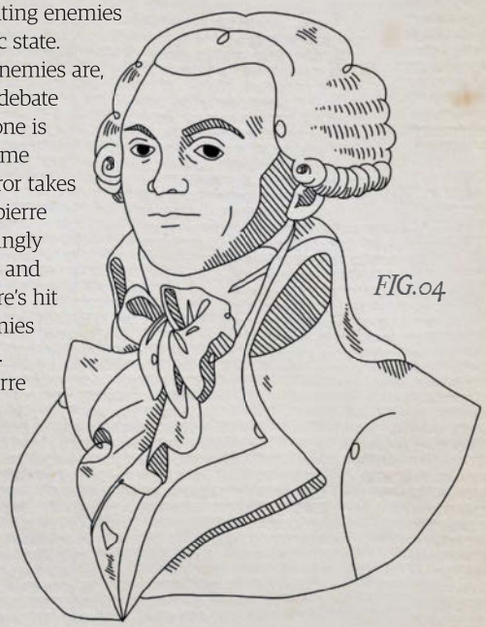


FIG.04

Helpful Skills

Staying alive during the Terror is tricky, but these skills could help you keep your head

Political nous

If you want to stand a chance of surviving the Terror, your best bet is to learn the laws. Equip yourself with the political knowledge you need to fight yourself out of a sticky corner.

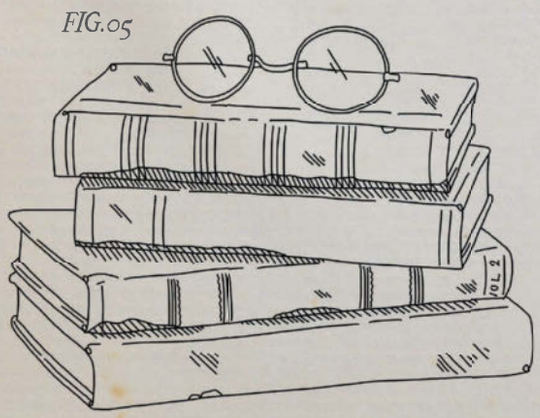


FIG.05

Baking

With poverty, famine and inflation sweeping the newly founded republic, arming yourself with skills like baking could save your life. Flour is scarce, but money is even more elusive and with extreme inflation, nobody can afford the extortionate cost of a crumb.

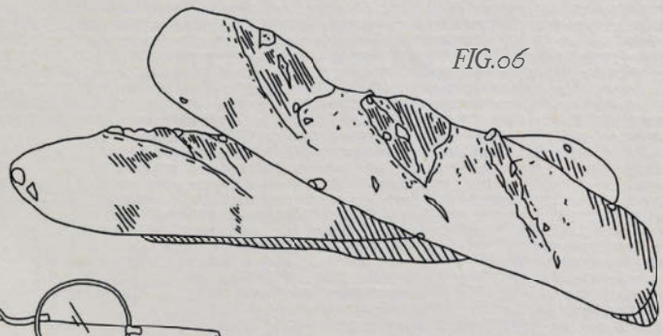


FIG.06

Dressmaking

Did you decide to get out of Paris? You'll need your sewing skills now – with so many of the nobility being forced to flee, there wasn't much time for them to pack a suitcase. Old habits die hard, however, and the rich will still want to flaunt their wealth with excessive clothing.

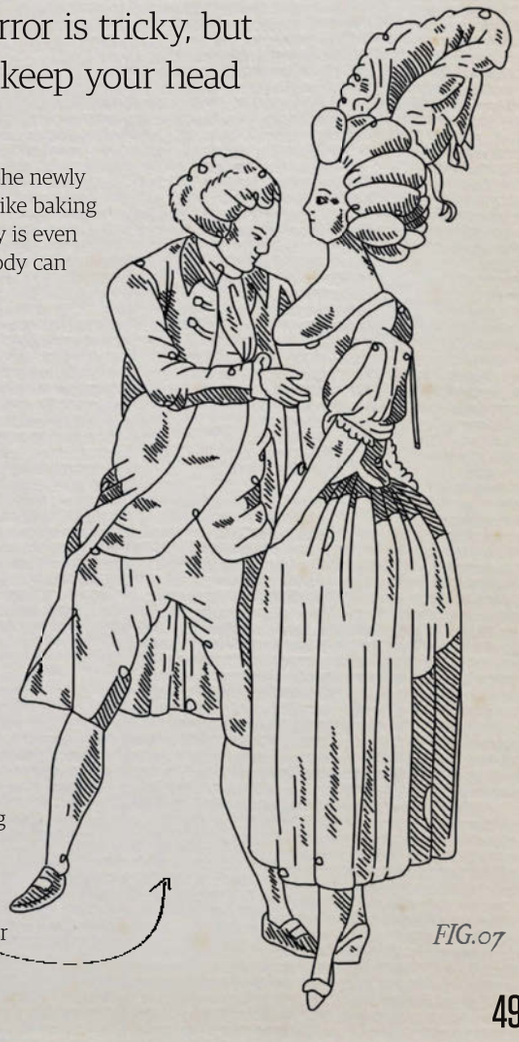


FIG.07

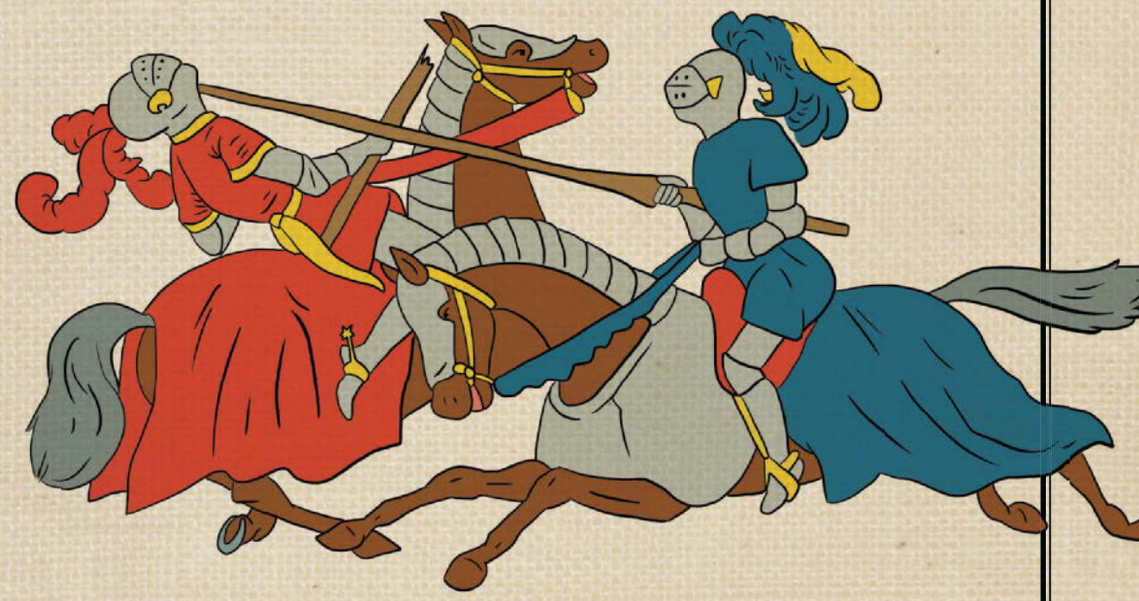
Everything you wanted to know about The Dark Ages but were too afraid to ask

The known world didn't just fall to its knees immediately after the fall of the Roman Empire. Here's what really happened in the Dark Ages

Written by Jack Griffiths

What were the Dark Ages exactly?

The 'Dark Ages' is a term that is now widely considered to be archaic and inaccurate. It has long been believed that Europe went backwards technologically, culturally and socially after the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the 4th century, hence why this era has been labelled 'dark'. Another reason for this unflattering nickname is because of the lack of documentation from this time. However, new research has exposed this interpretation of the era as barbaric and uncivilised as being entirely unfair. Historians now prefer to label it the Early Middle Ages or Early Medieval era, leaving behind the incorrect connotations of darkness. Some see the Dark Ages as ending with the advent of the Medieval Warm Period in the year 900, but others see it as having lasted until the beginning of the Renaissance in the 14th century, as we have done here.



How quickly did the Roman Empire crumble?

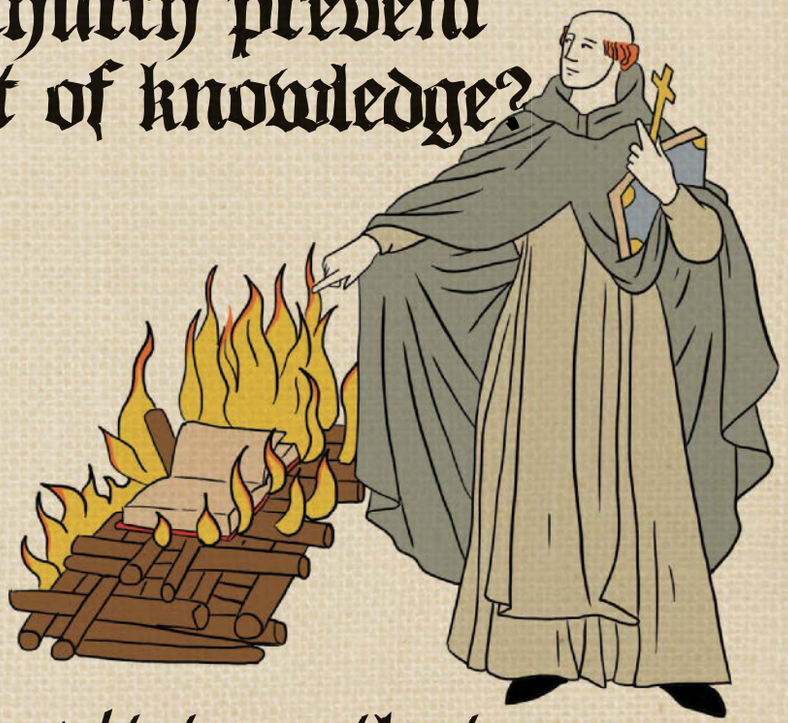


The saying goes that Rome wasn't built in a day, and it definitely didn't fall in a day either. The one time capital of the Roman Empire was assaulted numerous times and its fall was a gradual economic and social degradation of a once all-conquering force, not a single one-off catastrophic event. The closest there is to one single key moment is the sacking of Rome in 410 by the Visigoths, when the Eternal City was plundered by the foreign invaders. At this time, the empire had already been split into two and Constantinople was now the most prosperous of the Roman cities. The Western Roman Empire limped on until 476 when the final emperor, Romulus Augustus, was forced to abdicate by Odoacer, who would become the first Gothic king of Italy. Meanwhile, the Eastern Roman Empire, or Byzantine Empire, flourished until 1453 but did not make many significant territorial gains in Europe and instead branched out into Asia Minor and North Africa. Meanwhile, western and central Europe were now divided and dominated by warring factions such as the Visigoths, Slavs, Ostrogoths, Vandals, Angles and Saxons. To many historians, this signalled the beginning of the Dark Ages, but was it as 'dark' as we've been led to believe?

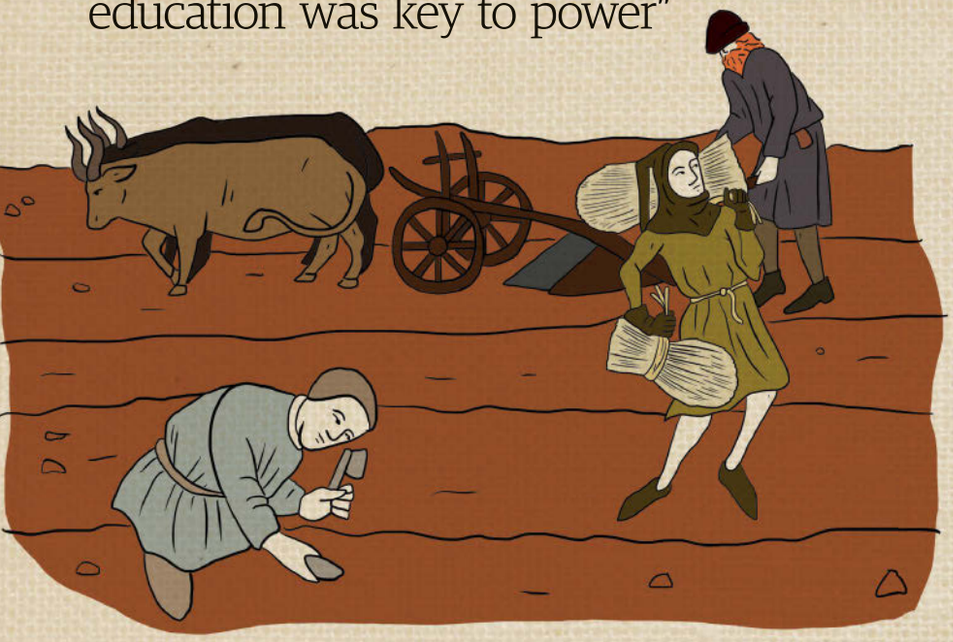
Did the Catholic Church prevent any advancement of knowledge?

The fall of the Roman Empire and the contraction of Celtic lands paved the way for Christianity to dominate Europe. Paganism was still common, but where the Church was dominant, it took control of not just religion but also philosophy, morals, politics, art and education, and has long been criticised for stunting the progression of knowledge in the era with its strict rules on learning. Bishops and priests only taught the upper class how to read and write Latin, and so the main flaw in this system was that the lower-class peasants, and nearly all women, were turned away from any educational opportunities, not that no one at all was being taught.

In the 9th century, Charlemagne, ruler of the Carolingian Empire, decreed that every cathedral should have its own school of learning, as he realised education was the key to power. Ultimately, the Church didn't prevent the advancement of knowledge, it just persuaded people to play by its rules, which slowed but did not nullify the progression of thought. There was some tension with so-called heretics but this would be more prevalent in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance. The idea that the Church prevented free thought and learning is primarily misinformation spread from the 18th-century period of Enlightenment.



"Charlemagne decreed that every cathedral should have its own school of learning, as education was key to power"



Is it true that no one lived in cities?

With hindsight, it's easy to believe that the fall of Rome signalled the end of civilised urban centres and the beginning of a war-torn and barbaric Europe. The city of Rome was a shadow of its former self and had not been the capital since the empire split. Despite this move away from the historic centre of the Roman Empire, cities like Ravenna and Florence still functioned and maintained at least part of the splendour they had during the days of empire. It's true though that many did embrace a more nomadic lifestyle – the Huns being an obvious example, sweeping in from Asia in 445. Led by their infamous leader Attila, their vicious attacks prevented significant settlements arising in Eastern Europe for centuries. Their tactic of destroying everything in their path rather than constructing settlements was a key reason for the lack of cities in Central and Eastern Europe. The same could be said for the Vikings in Northern Europe, but despite their penchant for pillaging, they did construct long-term sites at York and Dublin, among other places. Back on the continent, the majority of the Germanic hordes had a habit of only sticking around to build forts, not towns for trade and commerce. With all the fighting going on, it did take time for cities to be built up. By the 13th century, cities such as London, Paris and Cologne had all become important centres for trade and commerce, making them thriving residential areas.

Did everybody believe that the Earth was flat?

Let's debunk a myth: the Catholic Church never taught the idea that the Earth was flat. In fact, there is no evidence at all to suggest that people in the Dark Ages ever believed that this was true.



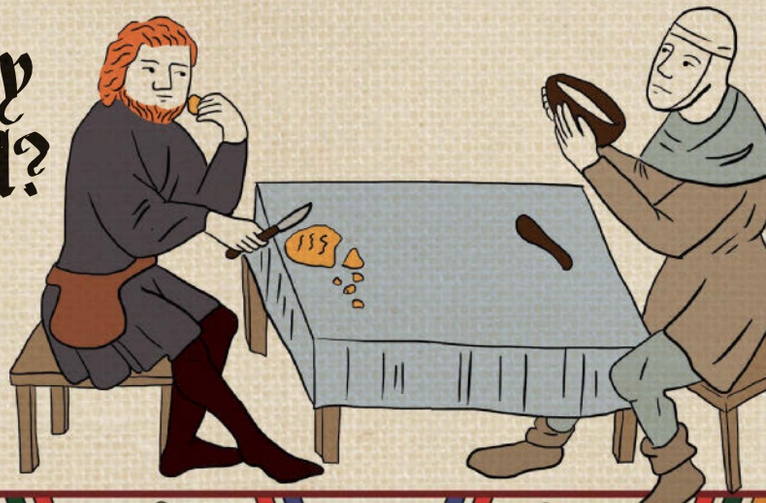


Were there any developments in medicine at all?

The Church's encouragement of praying for cures rather hindered scholars finding preventions to disease, and it was a commonly held belief that ills were punishments from God. However, there was progress even if in some cases it was down to luck and superstition rather than actual knowledge. Remarkably, it has recently been found that a 10th-century Saxon treatment for treating eye infections is still useful today. Scientists have tested the remedy and found that the mix of onion, garlic and cow's bile can completely kill the MRSA superbug. Further east, the Islamic Golden Age was also developing its own medical breakthroughs including the building of hospitals and the idea of record keeping, which would greatly help the understanding of what causes disease.

Did people really only eat bread and gruel?

Dark Age cuisine gets a bit of a bad reputation, especially when compared to the glorious banquets put on by the Romans, but it wasn't all just stale bread and gruel. The access to food all depended on wealth, but for the most part even the poor had at least some access to meat including cows, horses, goats and pigs, as well as being able to fish for cod, haddock, pike and perch. The staple foods in Britain were eggs, bread, porridge, cabbage, turnips and cheese, so the cuisine was by no means completely bland or diseased; it just depended on how good the harvest was that year.





Is it true that no one took baths?

Well, no. Soap may have been a luxury that was only used sparingly even by the upper classes – who preferred to mask their body odour with strong perfumes – but this did not stop people bathing. There are conflicting accounts on how clean people were, with some sources stating personal hygiene simply didn't exist while others say the Anglo-Saxons scoffed at the Viking idea of bathing once a week. More recent research has shed light on the notion that the population knew of the importance of washing and that dirt was generally a bad thing. King John is even known for taking a bathtub when he toured England. While most Roman baths across Europe fell into disrepair, replacements were eventually constructed, with Paris having 32 by the 13th century. This made Europe more hygienic than you'd probably think.

What fun could you have?

Study on the period nearly always focuses on war, conflict and invasion, but people still knew how to have fun. Music was a popular past time and the scholar Bede tells of an event at Whitby Abbey where entertainment was provided by the playing of a harp. Literature was also popular and, as well as Bede's many writings, the epic poem *Beowulf* was written at some point between the 8th and 11th centuries. Much of the poetry from the era wasn't noted down but memorised and then recited. Riddles were also popular, as were board games and simple activities like hide and seek. In the Byzantine Empire, many Roman amenities were maintained so races and theatres stayed open to entertain the masses.





Were thousands of women burned for witchcraft?

Many believe that the barmy idea of witchcraft was a phenomenon that dominated the Dark Ages and the Late Middle Ages that followed. However, the mass hysteria actually came much later in the Renaissance and Enlightenment eras with the 1692-93 Salem witch trials the most well known. There were burnings, but these would have been concentrated on those the Church believed to be heretics and, on occasion, military enemies. Witch trails dominated Early Modern Europe, not the Dark Ages.



Did people only drink beer?



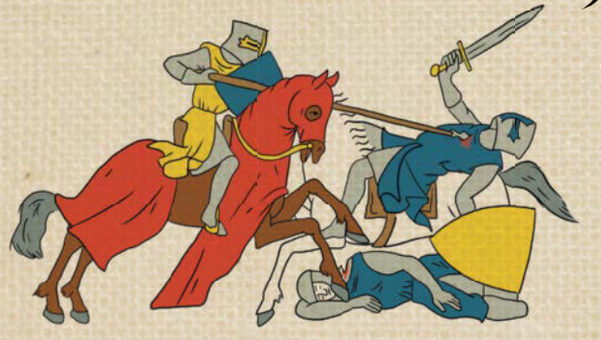
Water would be drunk from shared wells or straight from a river. With no real idea of how germs spread, these sources could often be contaminated and would cause illness. This was primarily down to the poor public health in communities where people would bathe in the same water they drank and would simply tip waste into the streets. Because of this, it was sometimes (but not always) safer to drink alcohol. This apart, it is a myth that people in the Dark Ages didn't drink water at all. In fact, it's quite the opposite, and we know this from the writings of Byzantine physician Paul of Aegina, who wrote about the benefits of drinking good ol' H2O. Also, the 'beer' wasn't high-percentage booze. The most common drink was low-alcohol mead or ale, which acted as the middle ground between polluted water and getting sozzled on strong brew.

Was the world beyond Europe a wasteland?



As the West was experiencing the Dark Ages, the Islamic world was going through its Golden Age. Islam was spreading out in the Middle East, North Africa and Asia and bringing with it a rich culture of learning. Dominated by the Umayyad (661-750) and Abbasid (750-1258) caliphates, Baghdad became one of the greatest cities on Earth. The Islamic caliphates were the largest economic powers of the era and would be the pinnacle of society and industry, with Europe playing catch up.

Were states at constant war with each other?



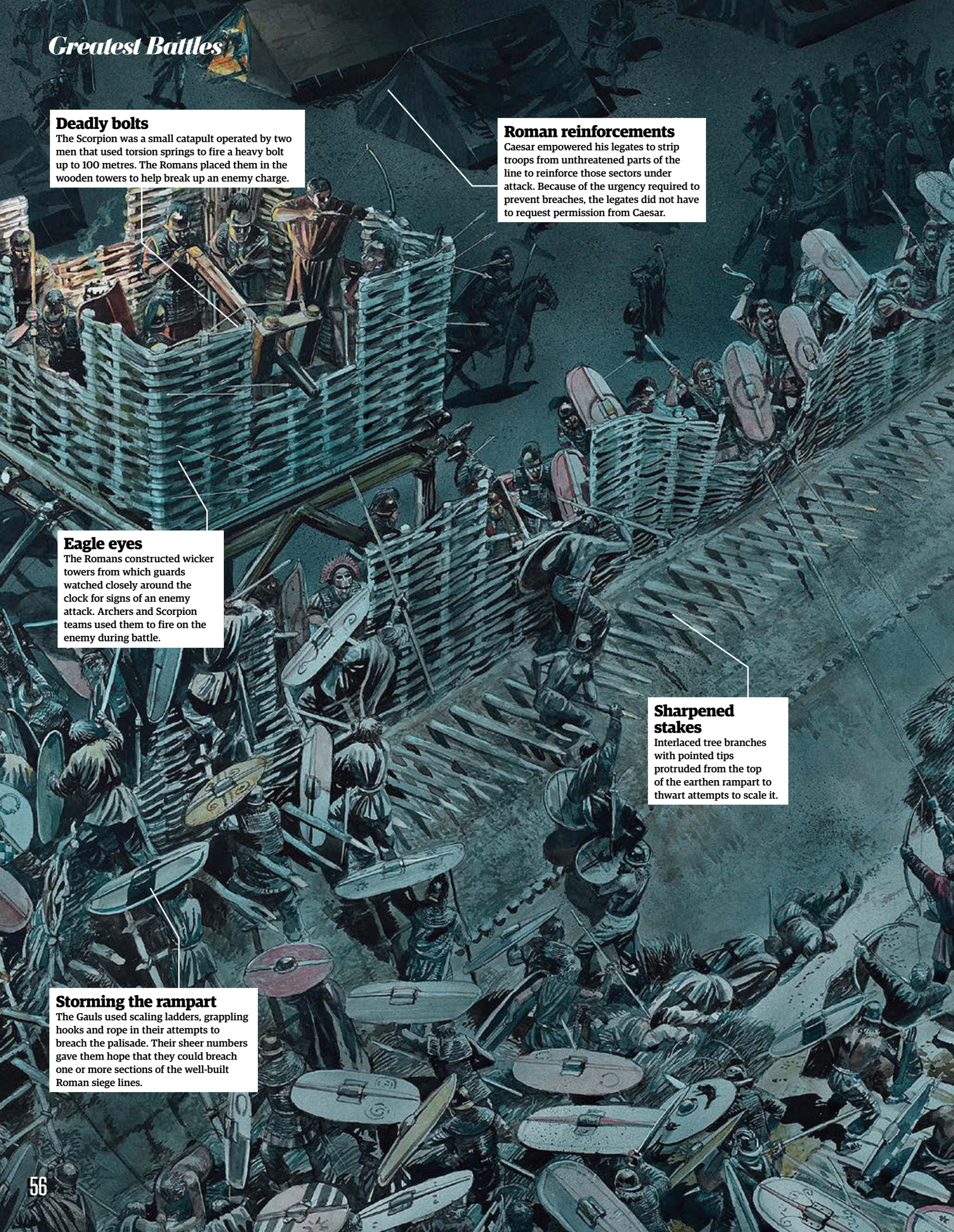
With Pax Romana a distant memory, there was a lot of conflict in Europe at the time but it was very different to what came immediately before and after. Unlike in the Roman era, large standing armies weren't the order of the day and instead tribes and civilisations tended to fight in small-scale skirmishes rather than drawn-out campaigns. The Vikings from the north, the Saracens from the south and the Huns from the east were the masters of this new and effective hit-and-run tactic of warfare. Wars weren't fought on a large-scale again until the First Crusade in 1095.

An unusual alliance at the Battle of Chalons

Even after the Sack of Rome and the advent of the Dark Ages, the Roman Legion wasn't quite finished

41 years after Alaric had overseen the destruction of Rome, what remained of the Western Roman Empire joined with the Visigoths to help extinguish a new threat, the Huns. Attila the Hun and his hordes of mounted warriors had ravaged Central and Eastern Europe and driven the Visigoths westwards into Europe. By the summer of 451, the Huns were on the march and had already sacked major towns like Cologne, Strasbourg and Reims. Roman military commander Flavius Aetis called to Theodoric I the Visigoth king for aid and, after initially being rebuffed, was promised support and the unusual alliance met on the Catalaunian Fields in the modern day Champagne-Ardenne region of France.

The battle began with the Hunnic-Ostrogoth coalition pressing forward against Aetis's men who managed to repulse the attack. As the Huns reeled backwards, the Visigoths entered the fray and forced the enemy back. Attila and his army were forced to go back, and although they weren't totally driven from the battlefield, they would effectively concede defeat. The victory was one of the last for the Western Roman Empire and the Huns would be back, but Attila's aura of invincibility had been shattered.



Deadly bolts
The Scorpion was a small catapult operated by two men that used torsion springs to fire a heavy bolt up to 100 metres. The Romans placed them in the wooden towers to help break up an enemy charge.

Roman reinforcements
Caesar empowered his legates to strip troops from unthreatened parts of the line to reinforce those sectors under attack. Because of the urgency required to prevent breaches, the legates did not have to request permission from Caesar.

Eagle eyes
The Romans constructed wicker towers from which guards watched closely around the clock for signs of an enemy attack. Archers and Scorpion teams used them to fire on the enemy during battle.

Sharpened stakes
Interlaced tree branches with pointed tips protruded from the top of the earthen rampart to thwart attempts to scale it.

Storming the rampart
The Gauls used scaling ladders, grappling hooks and rope in their attempts to breach the palisade. Their sheer numbers gave them hope that they could breach one or more sections of the well-built Roman siege lines.



Night attack
The besieged Gauls launched a major assault on the Romans' inner siege line. Both Vercingetorix's men and the Gallic relief army attempted night assaults just before dawn in the hope that the darkness would afford them the element of surprise.

Fascines
The Gauls tossed bundles of sticks into the dry ditch at the base of the rampart to bridge it during an attack.

Moat
As part of their elaborate field fortifications, the Romans diverted water from the rivers on either side of Alesia to fill the outer ditch of the inner siege lines to slow an attack by the besieged Gauls.

GREATEST BATTLES

BATTLE OF ALESIA

EASTERN FRANCE SEPTEMBER 52 BCE

Written by William Welsh

Julius Caesar's Germanic horsemen thundered toward the Gallic cavalry formed up on the wide plain. Answering the challenge, the Gallic cavalry rode to meet them in battle. In a swirling melee, the Germans and Gauls fought each other with javelins, spears and swords. The Germans eventually prevailed, and the Gallic horsemen fled the field leaving the battlefield strewn with their dead.

The cavalry encounter was the first blood drawn when a 100,000-strong Gallic relief army arrived to assist 80,000 Gauls at the hilltop town of Alesia. After five years conquering the Gauls, Caesar faced a widespread rebellion in early 52 BCE led by Vercingetorix, the chief of the Averni tribe. Following several losses to Caesar, Vercingetorix established a fortified encampment in August on the eastern end of the oval-shaped, 150-metre-high limestone plateau. The youthful Gallic commander believed that if a second Gallic army were to come to his aid, the two armies would be able to crush the 55,000-strong Roman army. While the besieged Gauls awaited assistance, Caesar built one of the greatest siege works known to history.

When the relief army arrived, it bivouacked to the west of the Romans. Throughout the following day, the relief army constructed the equipment it would need for an assault. That evening, the Gauls launched a major assault against the west end of the Roman works, but they failed to break through. During this event the Roman commander Marc Antony distinguished himself.

The leaders of the relief army devised a clever ruse. One of them, Vercassivellaunus, would lead a force composed of the fiercest warriors to Mont Rae before daybreak. The following morning, the remaining Gauls would launch a diversionary attack. Once the Romans were heavily engaged, Vercassivellaunus would launch a surprise attack against a gap in the north-west section of the works.

As planned, Vercassivellaunus launched the main attack at midday, catching the Romans by surprise. Thousands of battle ready Gauls streamed down towards the waiting Roman battlements. To assist the relief force, Vercingetorix launched a co-ordinated attack from within the siege lines.

Pressed from within and without, the Roman army was stretched to the breaking point. With the fate of the battle hanging in the balance, Caesar sent his second-in-command, Titus Labernius, with six cohorts to stem the sea of wild Gauls. On his way, Labernius gathered another 11 cohorts that he fed into the expanding battle.

The din of battle would have been tremendous – clanging swords mixed with the shouts of attacking troops and the screams of the horribly wounded.

But Caesar was not about to be outfoxed. He ordered his Germanic cavalry to sally forth and strike Vercassivellaunus's troops from behind. The counterattack worked and the Gauls fled in disorder. After having made two large-scale attacks, both of which failed, the relief army departed.

The next day, Vercingetorix surrendered to Caesar. Shortly afterwards, all of Gaul submitted to Roman rule. Caesar had campaigned in Gaul to win fame and fortune, and most importantly, to gain military experience that would put him on par with his rival Pompey the Great. Alesia served as a magnificent capstone to Caesar's triumphant Gallic campaign.

Romans

INFANTRY 40,000
AUXILIARY 10,000
GERMANIC 5,000

TOTAL TROOPS 55,000



GAIUS JULIUS CAESAR
LEADER

Caesar needed to win a victory to rival the military achievements of Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus.
Strengths He was a great tactician and had the undying respect of his men. He was confident, determined, and resourceful.
Weakness Caesar took a major gamble pitting his highly disciplined, well-trained army against a vastly larger force.



LEGIO X EQUESTRIS
UNIT

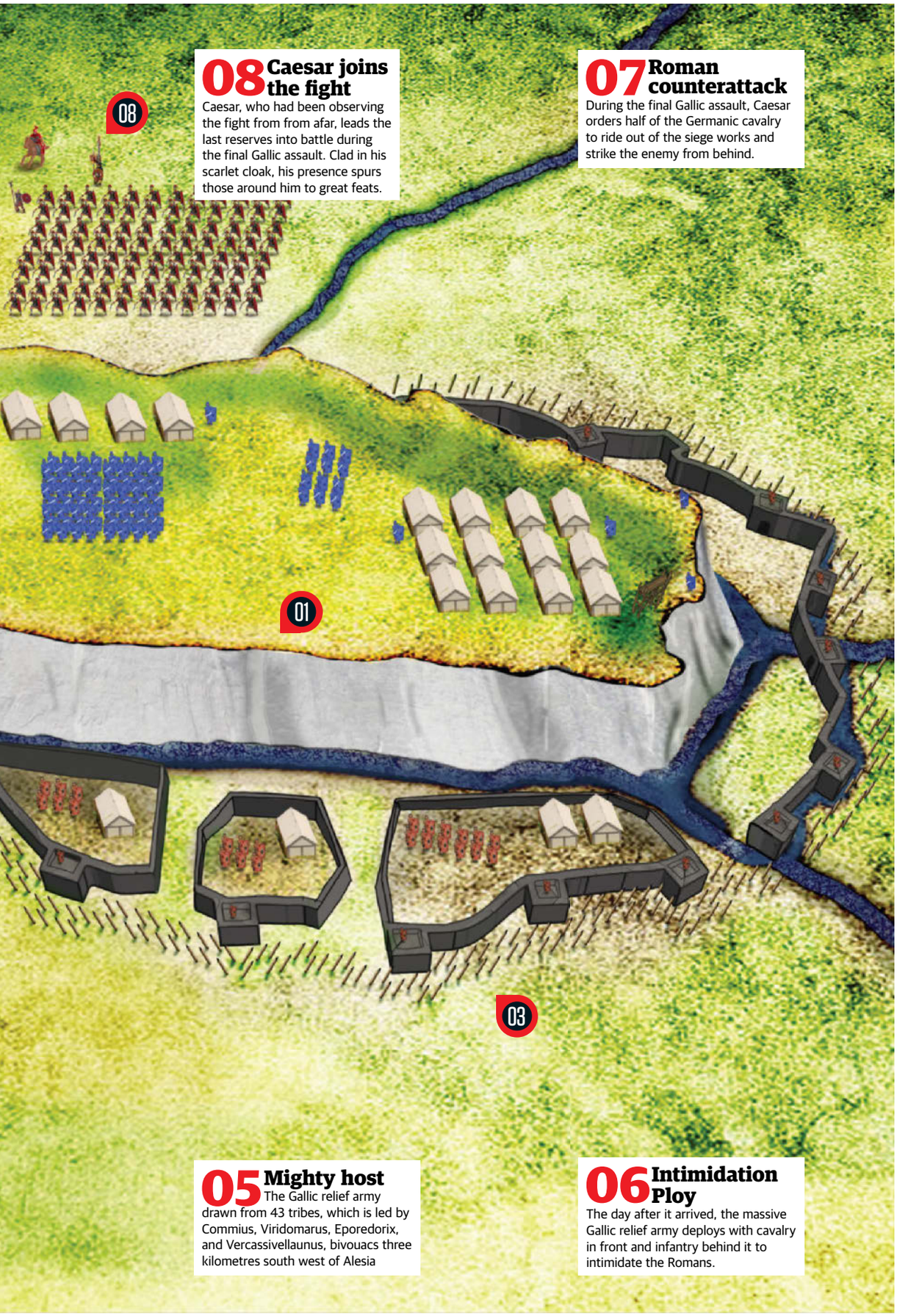
Caesar raised, trained, and led the legion, which served with him throughout the Gallic Wars.
Strengths The legionnaires fought as a co-ordinated team that held together well under pressure.
Weakness The members of the legion were egotistical and expected frequent rewards.



PILUM
KEY WEAPON

The two-metre-long javelin featured an iron shank. It could be thrown or used as a spear in close-quarters combat.
Strengths It was a sturdy, versatile, and proven weapon particularly effective against an enemy charge.
Weakness Its offensive attributes exceeded its defensive capabilities.





08 Caesar joins the fight
Caesar, who had been observing the fight from from afar, leads the last reserves into battle during the final Gallic assault. Clad in his scarlet cloak, his presence spurs those around him to great feats.

07 Roman counterattack
During the final Gallic assault, Caesar orders half of the Germanic cavalry to ride out of the siege works and strike the enemy from behind.

05 Mighty host
The Gallic relief army drawn from 43 tribes, which is led by Commius, Viridomarus, Eporedorix, and Vercassivellaunus, bivouacs three kilometres south west of Alesia

06 Intimidation Ploy
The day after it arrived, the massive Gallic relief army deploys with cavalry in front and infantry behind it to intimidate the Romans.

Gauls

INFANTRY 80,000
RELIEF 100,000
GALLIC 8,000

TOTAL TROOPS 188,000



VERCINGETORIX
LEADER

Realising the Gauls could not defeat the Romans in a pitched battle, he advocated guerrilla warfare.
Strengths He was a courageous warrior and strict disciplinarian.
Weakness He was cruel and unmerciful as shown by his decision to slaughter Roman innocents.



CAVALRY
UNIT

The elite horsemen possessed high-quality weapons, including javelins, a spear, a shield, and a sword.
Strengths They had high morale and hurled their javelins before they charged home.
Weakness They were undisciplined, and therefore quick to break and nearly impossible to rally.



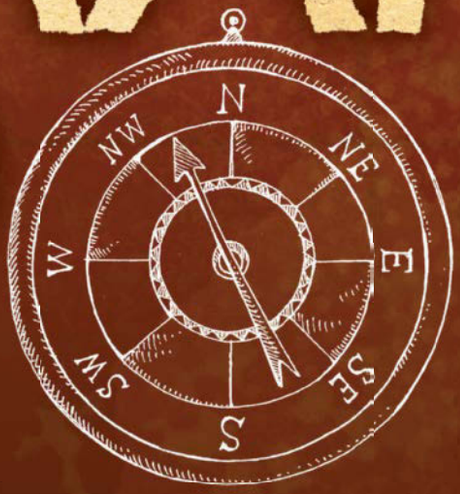
SLASHING SWORD
KEY WEAPON

The double-edged, blunt-tipped sword ranged in length from 85cm to 90cm and was worn in a scabbard on the right side.
Strengths It was an intimidating and deadly weapon that outclassed the Roman gladius.
Weakness This weapon required considerable space to wield effectively in battle.

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MARCO POLO



Journey to the court of Kublai Khan

Travelling to locations so exotic many would not believe his tales, Marco Polo lived an extraordinary life filled with wonderment and awe

Written by John Man

Marco Polo's life sounds like a fairy story. An ordinary boy from Venice is taken by his father and uncle across Asia and meets the world's most powerful ruler, who employs him for 17 years, after which he returns home and records his journey in the most famous travel book of all time.

It is an exceptional story, and true (mostly). Even more remarkable – it came about by a succession of pure chances.

In 1253, a year before Marco's birth, his father Niccolò and uncle Matteo left Venice for Constantinople, the capital of the eastern part of the Roman Empire. It had been made a Christian city by the Emperor Constantine, and was now the seat of Orthodox Christianity, as opposed to Rome, the seat of the Catholic west. But Constantinople was in decline, its economy dominated by foreign traders, notably Venetians. Bringing a ship-load of wares, Niccolò and Matteo set about exchanging their goods for jewels. After six years of profitable trade – and probably unaware of Marco's birth – they looked towards Crimea, where they could use their jewels to buy Russian wheat, wax, salted fish and Baltic amber, all much in demand in Europe.

Here fate played a role, several times over. They found that the two Venetian trading bases, Soldaia (today's Sudak) and Caffa (Feodosiya), were just inside the newly established Mongol Empire. Crimea, taken by the Mongols in 1238, was part of the so-called Golden Horde, the western section of an empire that stretched from Russia to China. To escape rivals they headed on east 1,000 kilometres to the local capital, Sarai, a city of tents and wagons on the Volga. After another successful year, they were about to set off home when they learned that Venice's rival city-state, Genoa, had driven the Venetians out of Constantinople. There was only one route possible: eastwards again to Bukhara, then a long return via Afghanistan. But once again fate intervened. A civil war between Mongol sub-states penned them in Bukhara for three years. At that point an envoy from Persia's Mongol ruler met them, and was astonished to find two 'Latins' who by now spoke good Mongol. He told them to go on eastwards, all the way to China, where his lord and master, Genghis's grandson Kublai, would give them a good welcome. "Sirs," he said, in Marco's account, "You will have great profit from it, and great honour." They would not be the first Europeans to be guided across Asia along the Mongol pony-express routes, but their two predecessors, both priests, had gone to Mongolia, not China.

The Polos arrived in Kublai's capital, Xanadu, and were well received. As luck would have it, Kublai was in need of a Christian presence to counterbalance the influence of local religions. So he asked the two Venetians to go home and return with 100 priests and some holy oil from Jerusalem (perhaps to be used as a magic charm). He gave them a golden safe-conduct pass that allowed them to use the imperial post-roads and sent them



Marco Polo's Venice

Medieval Venice, once a village in a bog, was a place of palaces, canals and glorious churches. From his birth, probably in 1254, Marco, raised in a fine merchant's house near the Rialto Bridge, would have admired the ornate splendours of St Marks, its west portal displaying four Roman bronze horses seized from Constantinople in 1204. He would have seen the city's ruler, the Doge, in state rituals designed to emphasise power and wealth reaching far beyond the city. With a navy that dominated the eastern Mediterranean, Venice had built an empire, with colonies, ports and islands by the dozen down the Adriatic coast. It owned Crete. Venetian enclaves drew merchants around Greece, to Constantinople and eastwards, across the Black Sea to Crimea, where two bases gave access to the Russian 'river-roads' of the Don and Volga. But these bases now gave access not just to Russia, but to all Asia. In 1238, Crimea had fallen to a vast new entity – the empire built by Genghis Khan, and now, 30 years after his death, ruled by his family, all owing allegiance to Genghis's grandson, Kublai Khan, some 6,000 kilometres away in north China.

off. After another three years of travel, the brothers reached Venice. It was 1269. They had been away 16 years, to find that Niccolò's wife had died and their son Marco was a well-educated 15-year-old ready to see the world.

Two years later, in September 1271, father and uncle set off again with Marco, via Jerusalem to pick up the holy oil. By yet another chance, a local prelate, Tedaldo Visconti, had just been made pope. Hoping that all China would fall to Christianity, he wrote a hasty letter to Kublai, urging conversion. He also gave them two - not 100 - priests, who quickly turned back.

The journey rapidly became an epic. There was war everywhere: Muslims fighting Crusaders, Mongol sub-empires fighting each other. Their golden pass would be no guarantee of safe-conduct. They avoided trouble by heading through eastern Turkey, Iraq and Persia, down to the port of Hormuz (present day Bandar-e Abbas). The exact route is unclear, because by the time Marco came to dictate his story, his memory was vague and he himself an unreliable witness.

But his account contains much truth. He claims to have been chased by robbers known

as Caraunas ruled by a king called Nogodar. This is a reference to a Mongol frontier force called Qaragunas and their commander Negüder, who turned themselves into marauders swinging unpredictably between loyalty, rebellion and pillage. Their descendants became today's Hazara and Mogholi minorities in Afghanistan.

Hormuz was a major port, and appallingly hot, where a certain wind, the simoom, could cook a corpse. Perhaps they were hoping to sail to India, but were put off by boats stitched together with coconut twine. They back-tracked to the north east across present-day Iran, picking up details of the assassins, the murderous Muslim sect named 'hashishin' after their supposed habit of smoking hashish. Marco tells fanciful tales of young men drugged, taken into a beautiful garden and seduced by damsels "singing and playing and making all the caresses and dalliance which they could imagine," before being sent off to kill. The assassins' HQ, Alamut, a grim fortress in the Elburz mountains, was actually 700 kilometres off Marco's route. But the stories would have been current, because the Mongols destroyed Alamut and the assassins themselves in 1257.

In Afghanistan, Marco describes Balkh, twice ruined by Genghis Khan but now somewhat resurrected as "a noble city and great." He also reveals that he had a young man's eye for female beauty. In one area, the inhabitants were very handsome "especially the women, who are beautiful beyond measure," and in another women padded themselves with cotton trousers "to make themselves look large in the hips."

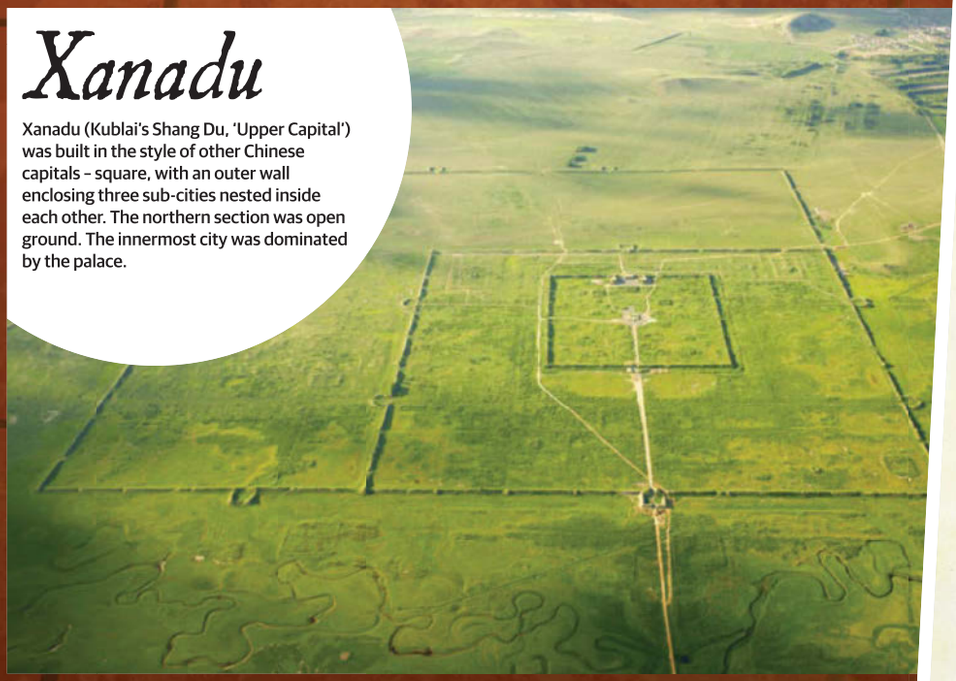
Then onwards and upwards, through what would become the Wakhan Corridor, a narrow strip of Afghanistan formed by Britain in the 19th century to create a barrier between British India and imperial Russia. It was an established route into China, but a tough and awe-inspiring one through the Pamir mountains, where glaciers grind down from 6,000-metre-high peaks and (according to Marco) the cold was so intense that no birds flew. He followed the Wakhan River up into a land of perpetual snow, where there lived huge sheep with horns 1.5 metres across, the sheep that would, in 1840, be named after him, Ovis Poli, the Marco Polo Sheep. He liked it up there because the pure air cured him of some unspecified complaint.

Descending from the 5,000-metre Wakhjir Pass, Marco and the elder Polos – presumably with a train of horses, camels, yaks and guides – would have come to the caravanserai of what is today Tashkurgan, some 250 kilometres south of Kashgar. Marco does not mention this part of the journey, despite the narrow track, tumbling river and teetering bridges of the Gez Defile and the lone, glaciated bulk of Mustagh Ata, the Father of Ice Mountain. His memory was dominated by the gardens, vineyards and estates of Kashgar, the first major city inside today's China. Then, as now, this was Uighur territory. Marco is rude about the Uighurs, "a wretched, niggardly



Xanadu

Xanadu (Kublai's Shang Du, 'Upper Capital') was built in the style of other Chinese capitals – square, with an outer wall enclosing three sub-cities nested inside each other. The northern section was open ground. The innermost city was dominated by the palace.





Marco was about 21 years old when he first met Kublai Khan, and he would stay with the emperor for 17 years



set of people, who eat ill and drink more ill." In fact, they were a sophisticated people with their own writing system, whose scholars were valued as scribes across much of Asia.

East of Kashgar lies the dead heart of Asia, the gravel wastes and shifting dunes of the Tarim Basin, with country-sized wildernesses – the deserts of the Taklamakan, Lop, Gashun Gobi and Kumtag. Nothing much grows here but scattered camel-thorns, and very little lives but sand-flies, ticks and a diffuse population of wild camels. Marco plays up the dangers, speaking of sand-spirits and demon voices calling men to their deaths. No Medieval traveller would have crossed it – they didn't have to, because there was a long-established route, later to be termed the Silk Road, that led along the southern fringes, from oasis to oasis, fed by rivers running down from the Kunlun mountains. Marco mentions towns – Yarkan, Khotan, Charchan – which still exist. Others have vanished beneath the drifting sands, notably Lou Lan, whose rediscovered ruins are now off-limits because China tests its nuclear weapons nearby.

This is China's far west, and it was Kublai's far west as well. Like a comet at the edge of the solar system, Marco was now beginning the long, slow fall towards Xanadu, the empire's Sun. But Kublai's control of the Western Regions, referred to by Marco as "Great Turkey," was tenuous. Much of it was claimed by Kublai's rebellious cousin, Kaidu, who remained a thorn in Kublai's side for 40 years.

Marco tells a good story about Kaidu: he had a daughter, the formidable Aijaruc (which he says means Bright Moon; in fact it means Moonlight). So big – "almost like a giantess" – strong and brave was she that no man could match her. Kaidu doted on her, and wanted to marry her off. But she always refused, saying she would only marry a man who could beat her in wrestling. Every challenger had to put up 100 horses. After 100 bouts, Aijaruc had 10,000 horses. Then a rich and powerful prince arrived, offering 1,000 horses. They wrestled. She won. Thereafter, Kaidu took her on campaigns, where she proved her worth dashing into the enemy to seize some man "as deftly as a hawk pounces on a bird." Is there any truth in this? A little. Mongolian women did indeed have a reputation for toughness, and Kaidu did indeed have a favourite daughter, but her name was Kutulun.

At the eastern end of the desert, Marco passed the western end of the Great Wall, built 1,000 years before to keep out nomads like the Mongols. It would not have looked great to him, because it was made of reeds and earth, and had been abandoned for half a century, with the Mongols ruling on both sides of it. If he noticed it at all, he did not think it worth a mention.

By now (probably the spring of 1275), it seems he and his entourage had been noticed. Messengers had galloped ahead with news that foreigners were coming – Mongol-speakers, bearing a golden pass, without doubt the 'Latins' who had been in Kublai's court ten years previously. Guards rode "a full 40 days" to meet them, and guide them to Xanadu, where Kublai was in residence.

At this point, perhaps because the surroundings were greener, Marco speaks of two animals. It is sometimes asked if Marco actually experienced everything he described. The answer is: almost always. These descriptions are proof. The first refers to a species of shaggy cattle, which he said with some exaggeration were "as large as elephants." This is the first western description of a yak, then unknown in Europe. The second is a deer the size of a dog, which he calls "a very pretty creature." It is a musk deer, from the neck gland of which comes the musk so desired by perfume-makers. He even guesses at its Mongolian name, gudderi – khüder in modern Mongolian – which no one could learn except by experience.

Now half way across modern China, Marco came to Yinchuan, which had been the capital of the Tangut people, a separate empire known as Western Xia, which had been destroyed by Genghis Khan in 1227. Marco's terminology is not exactly right, but almost so. He picked up the Mongol name for Yinchuan (Egrigaia in his text, Eriqaya in Mongolian), and the name of the local mountain range (Helan Shan, which he transcribed as Calachan).

> "Marco was as close to the emperor as any minister"

On then across the Ordos region of Inner Mongolia, past villages and cultivated fields, to a place of "a great many crafts such as provide for the Emperor's troops." This was Xuanhua, on the main road leading from today's Beijing to what was once the Mongolian border. Here, he would have turned right for Beijing, Kublai's new capital, or left for Xanadu, Kublai's first capital and now his summer residence. It was summer. His guides knew that their lord was in Xanadu. There was only another 250 kilometres to go.

Xanadu is a name derived from the Chinese Shang Du, 'Upper Capital,' as opposed to Beijing, which was Dadu, 'Great Capital'. We spell it that way because that was how the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge spelled it in his famous poem written on waking from a dream in 1797:

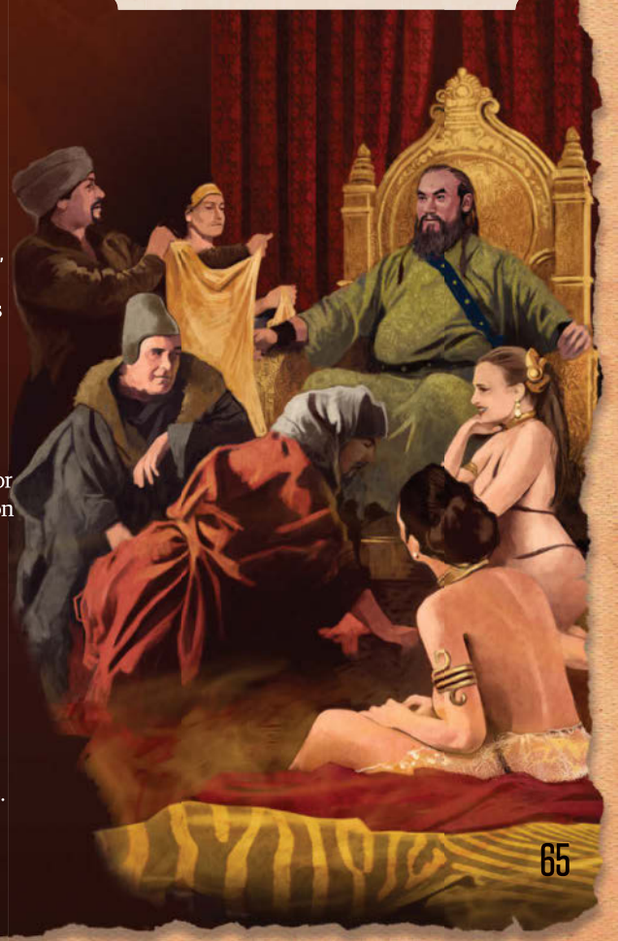
In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree
Where Alph the sacred river ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

There was a 'pleasure dome', but no caves, or Alph, and the Pacific is almost 400 kilometres away. Xanadu was and is on the Mongolian plateau, a place of rolling grasslands and low hills.



The real 'pleasure dome'

Marco described what he called a 'Cane Palace' in Xanadu, recalled in Coleridge's poem: "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan/ A stately pleasure dome decree." Because the poem records a dream, the palace is easily dismissed as a legend. In fact, Marco described a real building. By 'Cane' he meant bamboo, available in semitropical Yunnan, conquered by Kublai in 1253. Cut in half lengthwise to form overlapping, 15-metre 'tiles', bamboo stems formed a domed roof. To counteract the lift induced by high winds on the aerofoil roof, it was held down with '200 silken cords', in Marco's words. Probably used as a hunting lodge in summer, its real purpose was political – it symbolised Kublai's two cultures, Mongolian and Chinese. It combined the style of a Mongolian tent – easily dismantled for winter storage – with Chinese materials and techniques.





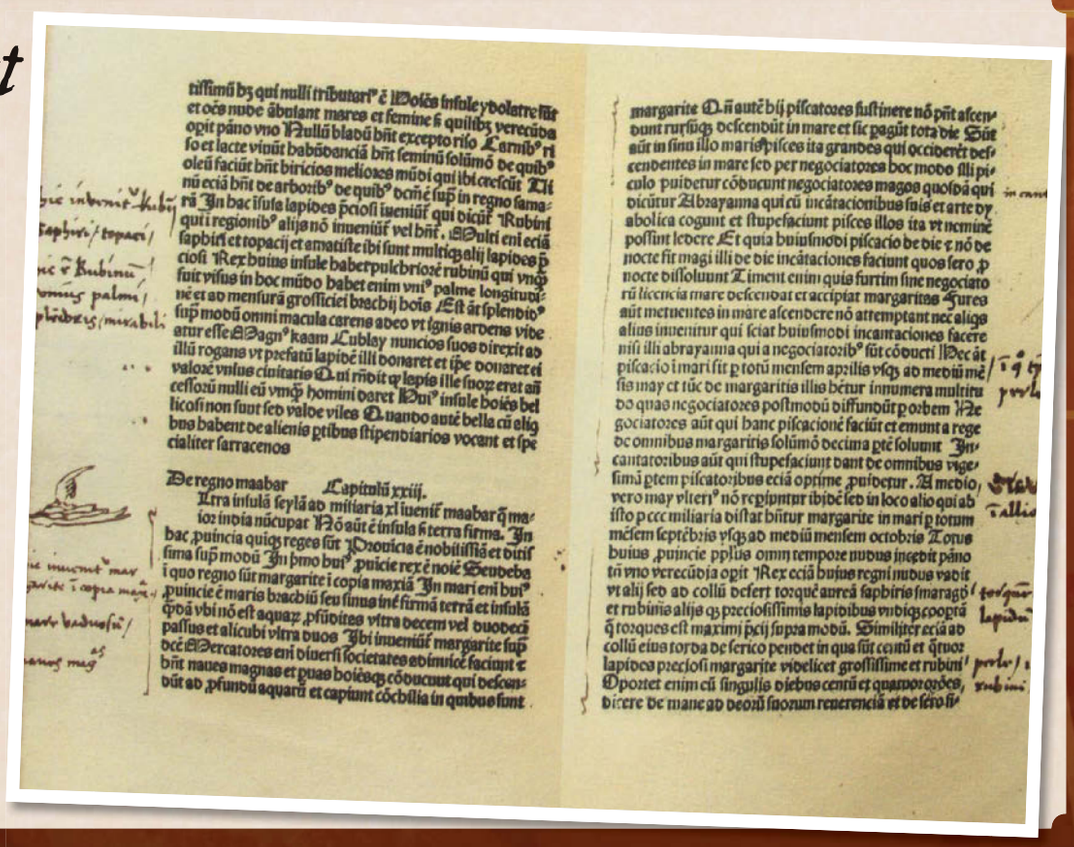


Marco's impact

Marco's book was dictated in haste while a prisoner of war in Genoa in 1299. It is usually called 'Description Of The World', or simply' Travels'. Since the book predated printing, it was 'published' by scribes and translators. The original was lost, and the copies were corrupted by additions, deletions and errors. And since there was no other information, people came to see the 'Travels' as a collection of fables.

It took almost exactly two centuries for his book to make its greatest impact. As learning took off in the 15th century, accounts by later travellers suggested that he was essentially truthful. The late-15th century was the great age of exploration as Europeans tried to reach the east, seeking trade with south-east Asia and the Chinese mainland, known as Cathay (Cataia, as Marco called north China, from the Mongolian 'Khiatad').

As the Portuguese opened the sea-route round southern Africa, Christopher Columbus, inspired by both Marco and a map based on his account, suggested a quicker route westwards across the Atlantic, thus reaching China directly. But the Portuguese were committed to the African route, and rejected Columbus, who proposed the same idea to the Spanish rulers, Ferdinand and Isabella. With nothing to lose, they backed him. The result: Columbus's discovery in 1492 that the ocean did not stretch all the way to China. There was another continent in the way. Columbus thought he had arrived in China. It was, of course, America.



In Marco's day, this Chinese-style city had 120,000 inhabitants, approached along the so-called Royal Road, which cut through a mass of round felt tents, horses, camels and traders.

Guided through the main gate to "a very fine marble palace," the three were taken into an audience with Kublai. He was delighted to see his 'Latin' envoys back again. Marco was overwhelmed with admiration of "the most potent man that ever hath existed." They knelt, then prostrated themselves, rose, and described their journey. They presented the pope's letter and the holy oil. Then Kublai asked about Marco.

"Sire," said Niccolò, "He is my son and your liegeman," handing Marco over to Kublai's service.

"Welcome is he too," said Kublai, beginning a relationship that would last 17 years. In that time, Marco was as close to the emperor as any minister, perhaps closer, because Kublai valued him as an independent source of information, untouched by the court's many rival groups. Speaking good Mongolian, Marco went on at least five great journeys to the corners of Kublai's Chinese possessions, probably to gather information on foreigners and minorities. Almost certainly, he was a member of the emperor's keshig, his 12,000-strong personal bodyguard. Later, he wrote of what he saw for Europe's Christian readers, but did not reveal why he was sent, probably because it implied too close a relationship with a non-Christian ruler.

Between his journeys, he experienced court life in all its magnificence. He accompanied Kublai as he travelled between Xanadu and his new, main capital Beijing, a journey that took three weeks, with Kublai riding in a specially designed room strapped onto four elephants, harnessed abreast. Beijing, chosen because it was the key to the conquest and rule of all China, was built almost from scratch after the destruction caused by Kublai's grandfather, Genghis Khan: temples, gardens, lakes and a palace of varnished

> "Kublai valued him as an independent source of information"

woodwork and glittering tiles. Uncounted halls, treasure rooms, offices and apartments surrounded an audience hall that could host 6,000 diners. In nearby parklands, deer and gazelle grazed. Court life revolved around 150 long-established rituals, controlled by four government departments and a Board of Rites. Other departments regimented 17,000 scholar-officials. The three main state occasions were the Khan's birthday at the end of September, New Year's Day and the spring hunt.

For New Year's Day and the khan's birthday, gifts flowed from the far reaches of the empire. Horses, elephants and camels paraded, thousands dressed in white (for luck) touched their foreheads to the floor in adulation and joined a vast feast, with the emperor and his entourage on a raised platform, served by ministers with napkins stuffed in their mouths, so that "no breath or odour from their persons should taint the dish or the goblets presented to the Lord."

On 1 March, Kublai supervised hunting on an industrial scale. In 40 days, the hunt covered some 500 kilometres. Marco describes 14,000 huntsmen and 10,000 falconers (though the numbers are probably exaggerated) with gyrfalcons, eagles, peregrines, hawks and goshawks, backed by 2,000 mastiff-like dogs, all hunting hare, foxes, deer, boar, even wolves. At night, the emperor camped in a tent-city that surrounded his own huge tent, which was lined with ermine and sable furs and waterproofed with tiger skins. By day, the emperor was in his vast howdah on his four elephants.

Marco described the scene: "And sometimes as they may be going along, the Emperor from his chamber is holding discourse with his barons, one of the latter shall exclaim: 'Sire! Look out for cranes!' then the Emperor instantly has the top of his chamber thrown open, and having marked the cranes, he casts one of his gyrfalcons."

For Marco, this life ended in 1292. Kublai was old, obese and in poor health. Marco, his father and uncle were nervous of their future under a new ruler. Kublai unwillingly allowed them to leave by sea as companions for a princess who was to be married to one of Kublai's relatives in Persia. They arrived home in 1296, two years after Kublai's death.

© Alamy, Joe Cummings, So 90 Images


VENICE
The starting point. Already one of Europe's richest cities, Venice's wealth was growing faster than ever. Its gold ducat would become Europe's prime currency. The Polos, a merchant family, were well placed to take advantage.
CONSTANTINOPLE
The city devastated by the Mongols in 1258 was recovering. Marco calls it 'Baudas', and refers to 'the great traffic of mercants... its silk stuffs and gold brocades.'
BAGHDAD
JERUSALEM
The former Crusader capital, Jerusalem was now in Muslim hands, but Muslims allowed Christians access. So the Polos could pick up oil from the Holy Sepulchre, as requested by Kublai.
HORMUZ
Marco records the ships from India loaded with 'spicery and precious stones, pearls... elephants' teeth and many other wares.' Debilitated by heat and a 'violent purging' caused by date-wine, the Polos returned northwards.
Journey to China
Marco's route ran from Venice to Jerusalem, across Saudi Arabia, doubled back to Afghanistan, over the Pamirs into China, past the deserts of today's Xinjiang, and finally to Xanadu.
N


Kublai's first capital was originally Kaipingfu (Marco's Chemeinfu), being renamed Shang Du ('Upper Capital') in 1263, 12 years before Marco's arrival.
XANADU
BEIJING
Newly established as Kublai's main base, the city was known as Dadu ('Great Capital') in Chinese, but also by its Turkish name Khanbaliq 'The Khan's City'. Marco turns this into Cambaluc.
KASHGAR
'Cascar' – Kashi in Chinese – was the first major city inside Kublai's empire. The inhabitants 'worship Mohammet... and live by trade and handicraft; they have beautiful gardens and vineyards and fine estates.'
DUNHUANG
Today's city is famous for 1,000 decorated Buddhist caves, made 400-1100 AD. Marco makes no mention of them. He refers to the city as 'Sachiu', from the Chinese Sha Zhou, 'Sand District.'
HANGZHOU
QUANZHO
KEY
outward
return

HERO OR VILLAIN?

Jesse James

The Robin Hood of Missouri, or a self-mythologising murderer and thief?

Written by Dominic Green



Defining moment

Taking the reins

When Frank James was identified as a member of a Confederate guerrilla unit operating in his native Clay County, a Union militia raided his family's farm, near Kearney, Missouri. Jesse, then 15, witnessed the mock hanging of his stepfather Reuben Samuels. It is believed that the Jayhawkers whipped Jesse too. By the end of the year, Jesse had joined Frank's militia unit.

May 1863

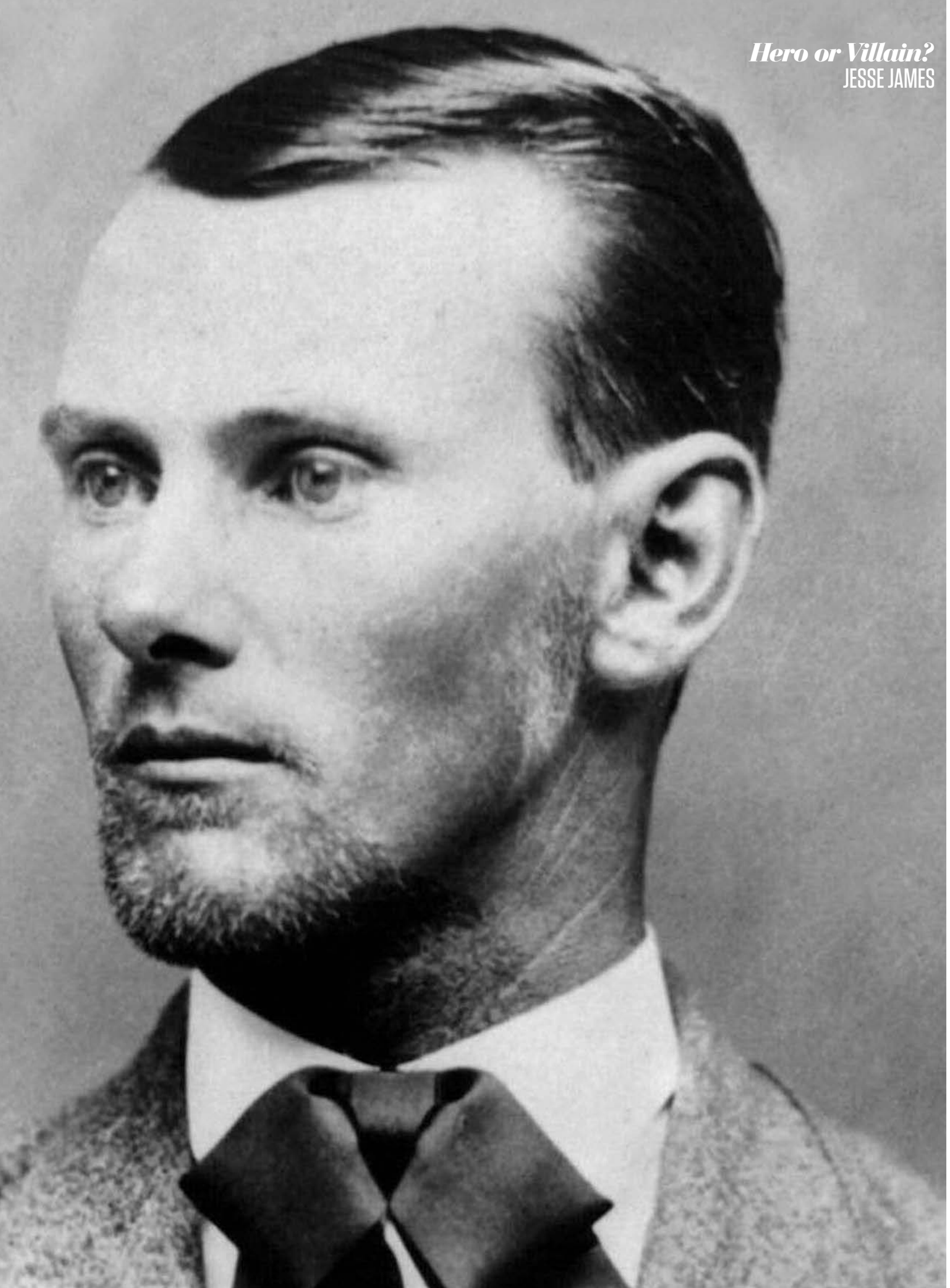
Jesse James was a celebrity in his lifetime, and he remains an icon of the Wild West and a hero of the Confederate South. Born in Clay County, Missouri, in 1847, James was the middle of three children. His mother Zerelda had attended Catholic school in Kentucky, and his father, Robert, was a prosperous, slave-holding farmer and evangelical preacher. When Jesse was three, his father, having gone West to save souls in the Gold Rush, died. Zerelda married twice in the next five years, giving Jesse four half-siblings.

Through the 1850s, the USA slid towards civil war. Missouri was on the border between the North and the South, and the front line cut across its society. Clay County, with more slaveholders and more slaves than average, was known as 'Little Dixie'. When the Civil War began in 1861, Jesse's elder brother Frank joined the Confederate Army.

Missouri became a battleground for militias, the 'Bushwhackers' for the Confederacy, the 'Jayhawkers' for the Union. Both groups committed atrocities. The Bushwhackers murdered Unionist sympathisers and executed Unionist prisoners, sometimes scalping the corpses. The Jayhawkers burned farms, executed Confederate sympathisers and even expelled them from Missouri. In 1863, after Frank James had joined the Bushwhackers, a Jayhawker militia raided his family's farm. The Unionists tortured Jesse's stepfather, and may have flogged 15-year-old Jesse too. Frank escaped and joined Quantrill's Raiders, a notorious guerrilla cavalry unit led by William C Quantrill. Frank probably took part in the massacre by Quantrill's Raiders of more than 200 men and boys at the Jayhawker stronghold of Lawrence, Kansas, in August 1863.

Frank returned home in the summer of 1864, and recruited his younger brother. Soon, they were riding with another notorious Bushwhacker leader, William 'Bloody Bill' Anderson. Jesse was shot in the chest within weeks. He recovered in time to take part in the Centralia Massacre. In September 1864, Anderson's men, drunk on whiskey, raided Centralia, Missouri, and captured a train. They ordered the 23 Union soldiers on the train to strip, then shot, maimed and scalped them all. Pursued by a Jayhawker militia, the next day Anderson's men ambushed and slaughtered more than 100 men.

When the Union authorities expelled Jesse and Frank's family from Clay County, and after Anderson's death a few weeks later, the brothers split. Frank went into Kentucky with Quantrill, and Jesse into Texas with Anderson's lieutenant, Archie Clement. In a fight with a Union patrol near Lexington, Jesse survived a second chest wound. Recovering at his uncle's house in nearby Harlem, he fell in love with his first cousin, Zerelda Mimms.



Hero or Villain?

JESSE JAMES



Jesse (left) and Frank James in 1872



Bob, Jim and Cole Younger, sitting left to right with their sister Henrietta

The war ended in 1865, but Jesse, like many Confederate veterans, failed to adjust to the peace. The society he had known was in ruins, and the Republican government was set upon Reconstruction, the rebuilding of Southern society. The Bushwhackers carried on their war. In 1866, Clement's gang conducted the USA's first armed bank robbery, against a bank owned by Republican ex-Jayhawkers. A government militia killed Clement soon afterwards, but his gang carried on robbing banks, usually killing civilians in the process.

In 1869, raiding a bank in Gallatin, Missouri, Jesse murdered a cashier; he had mistaken him for the killer of 'Bloody Bill' Anderson. The killing, and the brothers' daring escape from the posse that chased them out of town, made Jesse the most famous of the ex-guerrilla 'outlaws'.

Jesse liked his fame. He formed an alliance with another ex-Confederate cavalryman, John Edwards, the editor of the *Kansas City Times*, who published letters in which James claimed his innocence, defended the Confederacy and denounced the Republicans. Edwards, who campaigned to undo Reconstruction by bringing ex-Confederates to office in Missouri, praised James for remaining true to old Dixie. The legend of Jesse James was born.

Meanwhile, the James brothers teamed up with the Younger brothers, four ex-Bushwhackers from Missouri. For the next six years, the gang ranged across Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri and Louisiana, robbing banks, trains and stagecoaches. Numerous civilians were killed along the way, but the gang also acquired a reputation for chivalry. Not all of this was the work of John Edwards of the *Kansas City Times*.

In 1872, after a young girl had been shot in crossfire during a bank robbery at Columbia, Kentucky, Jesse wrote to the *Kansas City Times* denying that his men had shot her, even though by clearing his name so publicly, he incriminated the Younger Brothers in the robbery. In January 1874, during a stagecoach robbery in Arkansas, the gang returned a watch to its owner when they discovered that he was a Confederate veteran. They told him that the North had driven them to crime. Two weeks later, when the gang robbed a train at Gads Hill, Missouri, they checked the passengers' hands so as to not steal from any manual labourers.

By now, the Pinkerton Detective Agency was on their trail. In January 1875, following the murder of several Pinkerton agents, a group of Pinkerton detectives firebombed the James family farm. Jesse's mother lost her right arm, and Jesse's nine-year-old half-brother Archie was killed.

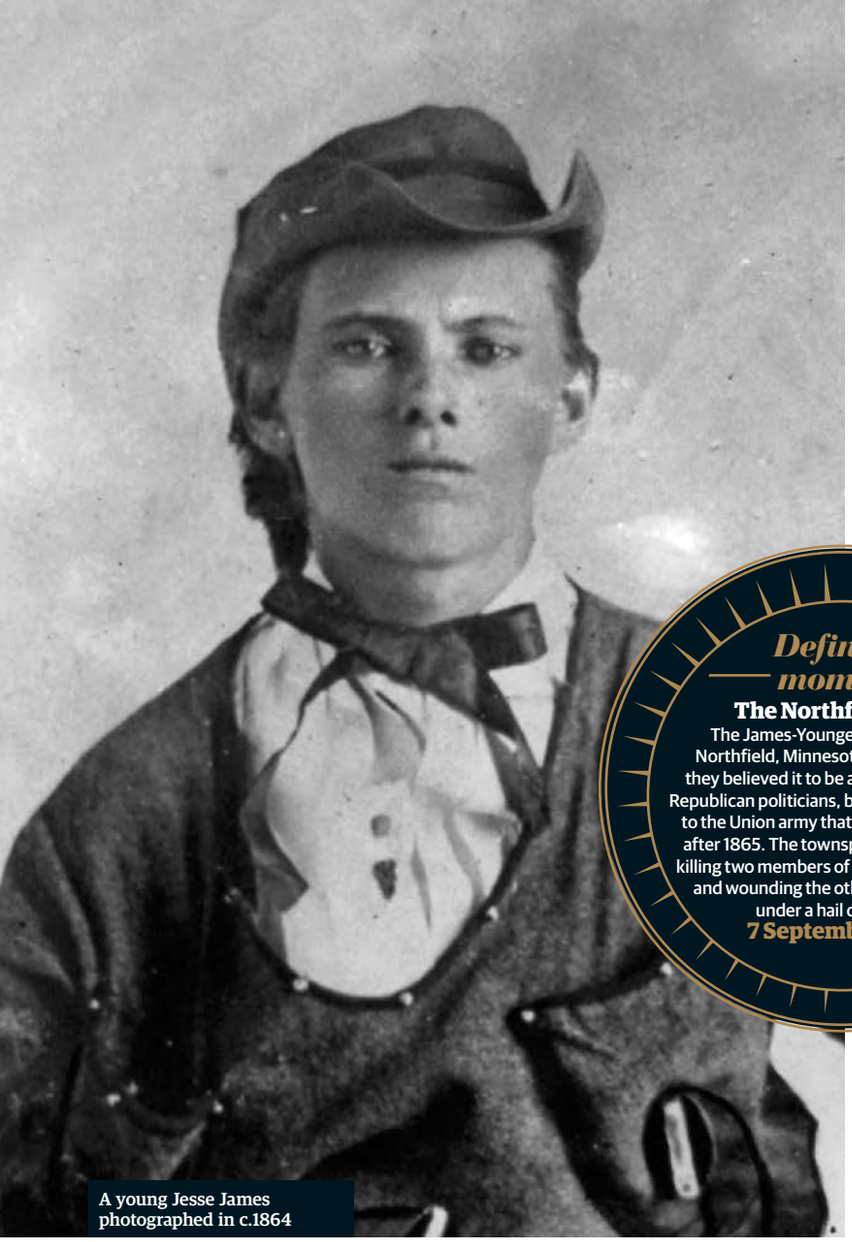
The gang's luck ran out on 7 September 1876, when it raided the First National Bank at Northfield, Minnesota. While Frank James, Bob Younger and an accomplice named Charlie Pitts held up the bank, Jesse James and four other men rode up and down the street, firing their guns in the air to keep people indoors. But the residents broke out their own weapons. Two of the gang were killed. Cole Younger was hit in the leg, Bob Younger in the arm, and Jim Younger in the face. The survivors escaped with only a few bags of nickels, and all had been wounded – Jesse in the leg – as they fled.

Defining moment

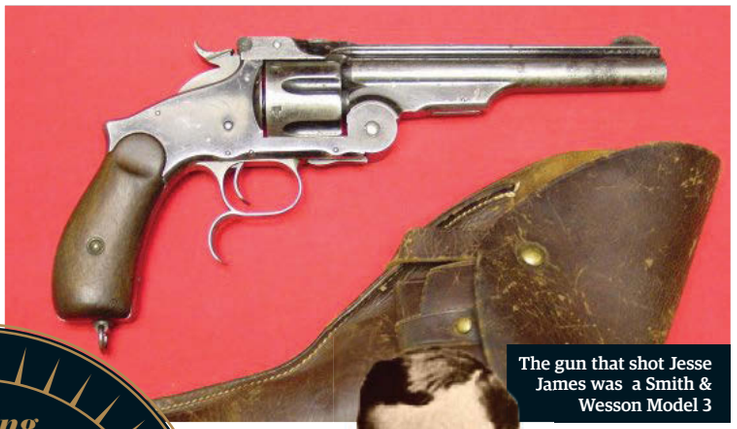
The Pinkerton Agency firebombs the family farm

After the James-Younger gang killed two agents the Pinkerton Agency had sent to infiltrate Zerelda Samuels' farm, Allen Pinkerton, founder of the detective agency, sought revenge. In the dead of night, detectives threw an incendiary into the farmhouse. Jesse's nine-year-old half-brother was killed, and his mother Zerelda lost her right arm.

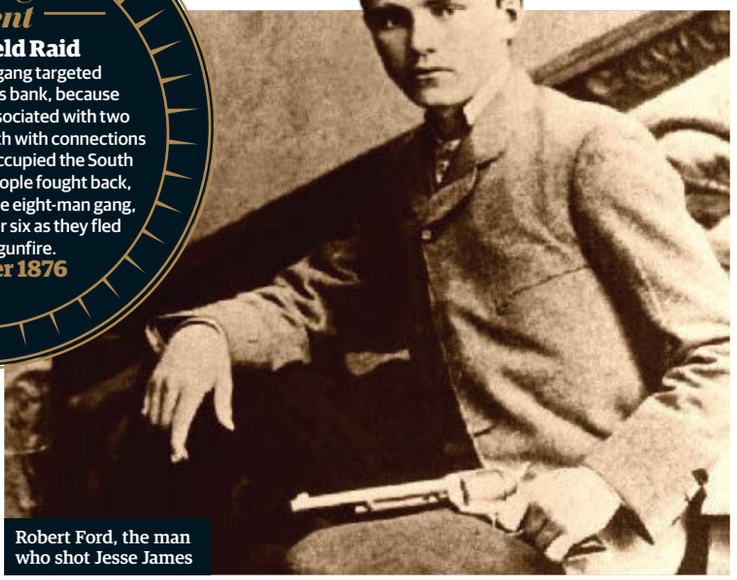
25 January 1875



A young Jesse James photographed in c.1864



The gun that shot Jesse James was a Smith & Wesson Model 3



Robert Ford, the man who shot Jesse James

Defining moment

The Northfield Raid

The James-Younger gang targeted Northfield, Minnesota's bank, because they believed it to be associated with two Republican politicians, both with connections to the Union army that occupied the South after 1865. The townspeople fought back, killing two members of the eight-man gang, and wounding the other six as they fled under a hail of gunfire.

7 September 1876

"When the gang robbed a train at Gads Hill, Missouri, they checked the passengers' hands so as to not steal from any manual labourers"

Chased by hundreds of militiamen, the gang split up. Two weeks later, the Youngers and Charlie Pitts were captured after a gunfight near La Salle, Minnesota. Tried, they received life sentences.

Frank and Jesse escaped to a farm in Nashville, Tennessee. They lived quietly for the next three years, until Jesse could no longer bear the tedium. In early 1879, he recruited a new gang and returned to crime. After a spree of train robberies, Missouri's new governor Thomas T Crittenden persuaded his officials and the railroad executives to offer a large reward for James's capture. But no one turned the gang in: sympathy ran high among ex-Confederates.

Instead, James was murdered in his own home by one of his own men, a new recruit named Robert Ford. With his brother Charley, Robert Ford approached Governor Crittenden and agreed to solve the problem of Jesse James in return for a reward of $5,000. Just after breakfast on 3 April 1882, as an unarmed James climbed onto a chair in his living room to wipe dust from a picture, Robert Ford shot him in the back of the head at point-blank range.

In a single day, the Ford brothers surrendered, were indicted for murder, sentenced to death and then pardoned. The cowardly nature of James's killing, and the impression that Missouri's governor had conspired James's assassination, further burnished the legend of Jesse James. Charley Ford, a morphine addict, committed suicide the following year.

In June 1892, a man named Edward O'Kelley served the verdict of the court of public opinion on Robert Ford – with both barrels of a shotgun. After murdering James, Ford had opened a saloon in Creede, Colorado. O'Kelley was sentenced to life in prison, but was pardoned in 1902 after a petition signed by thousands.

Surprisingly, several of the key members of the James-Younger gang survived – and played a part in maintaining the legend of Jesse James. Frank James surrendered in October 1882 in Missouri, apparently on the condition that he would not be extradited to Northfield, Minnesota. Frank was tried for two robberies in Missouri, but convicted of neither.

The Younger brothers served time in a Minnesota prison, but never assisted the prosecution of Frank James. Bob Younger died of tuberculosis in jail, but in 1901, Cole and Jim Younger were paroled on the condition they remained in Minnesota. Jim Younger shot himself in 1902. A year later, Cole Younger was pardoned on condition that he never return to Minnesota. He went home to Missouri and joined a 'Wild West' show with Frank James.

This was a different age: the Gilded Age of fantastic fortunes and populist politicians. Jesse James was remembered as a Robin Hood, an ordinary man who had stood up against powerful corporations, rather than the killer who had donned a Ku Klux Klan hood – and not just as a disguise. Jesse James robbed the rich – the banks and the railroads – but without feeding the poor. If he was loyal to his family and friends, he was also a habitual thief and killer.

Was Jesse James a hero or a villain? Let us know what you think

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Bluffer's Guide ENGLAND, 1811-13
The Luddite Rebellion



Did you know?

£50 was offered by King George IV to anyone "giving information on any person wickedly breaking frames"

Timeline

1799-1800

The Combination Acts are passed by Pitt the Younger, and trade unionism is made illegal. This angers many workers who are concerned about their rights.

EMBER

The rebellion begins as a group of weavers armed with improvised weapons smash frames in the village of Bulwell, Nottinghamshire.

EMBER

The attacks continue and spread to other counties as the year draws to a close. The Luddites benefit from British troops being engaged in the Napoleonic Wars.

UARY 1

The government responds to the violence by sending 3,000 troops to the Midlands. In March, machine breaking is made a capital offence.

What was it?

The Luddites were a group of textile workers – primarily from the English counties of Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire and Lancashire – who feared the consequences the Industrial Revolution was bringing. With the introduction of new spinning frames into factories, they were concerned their craft would suffer with a diminishing of wages and job opportunities. The rage against the machines began in Nottingham in 1811 when a group of incensed workers issued an ultimatum to their superiors: remove the machines or else. The masters called the Luddites' bluff, and so in a series of nocturnal raids, the frames met the business end of a sledgehammer. As dawn broke, bosses entered their factories to scenes of twisted metal; their prized machines had been dismantled and crushed. This continued infrequently for two years as thousands were smashed and even a mill boss by the name of William Horsfall was killed. Organised Luddism came to an end after violent retribution from both industrialists and the government took its toll on the rebels. Shockwaves had been sent through to the elite, but by 1813, the movement had disintegrated.

Why did it happen?

The rebellion is perhaps the closest England has ever come to full-scale revolution. The government responded to the disorder by sending hordes of spies north, but the systematic and secretive approach of the Luddites saw many avoid capture. After a law was passed making machine breaking a crime punishable by death, the outbreaks of violence became less severe as many dissenters were executed. The final embers of the Luddite rebellion were extinguished in 1817 and it became clear this was the localised act of disgruntled workers rather than a nationwide political movement. Nevertheless, the government was shaken and responded by decreeing a new right to industrialists that they were free to impose new technologies in mills at will. The relentless advance of the industrial revolution continued but the Luddites had made their point, and their actions undoubtedly influenced Chartism, which would arrive in the 1830s. The voice of the working class was getting louder.

Who was involved?



Ned Ludd

Late 18th century

It is debatable whether Ludd actually existed, but the legend of this rebel is where the Luddites got their name.



Spencer Perceval

1762-1812

The leader of the country during the rebellion, he is the only British prime minister to have been assassinated.



Jeremiah Brandreth

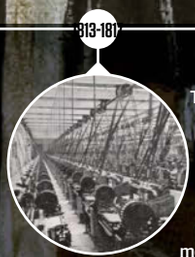
1785-1817

One of the few Luddites known by name, Brandreth led 300 men on a march on Nottingham on 9 June 1817.



JANUARY 1813

The tide begins to turn as government spies help apprehend the rebels and 17 Luddites are publicly hanged in York in January 1813.



1813-1817

The Luddite cause begins to diminish but small sporadic outbreaks of violence persist. The cotton and wool trade is mechanised further.

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BUGSY SIEGEL

American, 1906-47

Brief Bio

A pivotal character in the making of the modern American Mafia, Bugsy was the archetype Silver Screen mobster: shrewd, silver-tongued and tough as nails. Raised on the streets of the Big Apple, he climbed the underworld career ladder to criminal superstardom. It's said that actor George Raft based his gangster roles on Bugsy.

The Mobster who made Vegas

The story of Bugsy Siegel and the Flamingo Hotel

Written by Ben Biggs

When Benjamin 'Bugsy' Siegel landed in Las Vegas in 1945, bringing with him a whirlwind of under-the-table deals, the feds were paying attention. It's not as if Vegas, which by the 1930s and 1940s had grown from an abandoned Mormon fort into a desert waterhole frequented by fly-boys from the local United States Air Force base, was operating under the radar of the authorities. Since gambling was legalised in Nevada in 1931, there had been a low hum of criminal activity in what would become the jewel in the state's crown. Al Capone and his brother Ralph had even made plans to run their own casino there in the early days and some think they had a hand in the Pair-O-Dice Club – Vegas's very first casino on the famous Strip. But the bright light city-to-be hadn't seen the likes of Siegel before. This cat was connected to every East Coast mobster worth knowing. He was cunning, had a hair-trigger temper, a gift for violence and was fiercely intimidating.

These talents made him a natural leader of Murder Incorporated, the ruthless hit men-for-hire enforcement arm of Meyer Lansky and Charles 'Lucky' Luciano's National Crime Syndicate. Moreover, Siegel was an archetypal Hollywood gangster of his generation – a devilishly handsome, magazine-cover hero with piercing blue eyes who matched his silver-screen looks with effortless bad-boy charm. Bugsy made sure that he was seen in the trendiest nightspots and restaurants, he schmoozed with film stars like George Raft and Clark Gable, and enthusiastically revelled in his criminal celebrity status. He was also a big hit with the ladies – of course.

While the West Coast Hollywood playboy lifestyle undoubtedly suited Siegel, there was an (il)legitimate reason for his move to California. He could see a very lucrative future for the mob in the dustbowl of Las Vegas, and while his partners several thousand miles to the East weren't as convinced of the investment, Siegel was at that point in good standing with bosses like Lucky Luciano and his old friend Lansky. They were willing to bet heavily on Siegel's success, which would ultimately pay off for the mob, if not for Bugsy.

Siegel had already muscled in on the Las Vegas race wire service via one of Meyer's lieutenants, Moe Sedway, and by early 1945 it was returning a tidy sum of about $25,000 ($330,000 today) a



month. The deal was simple: Vegas bookies gave a cut of their profits – no argument – in return for betting odds and reliable data on winners. Siegel was expanding into the south west via Phoenix bookmaker Gus Greenbaum and was in the process of creating a bookmaking empire with a veneer of legitimacy, while he skimmed thousands of dollars away under the table. This inevitably put him into contention with former bootlegger and extortion racketeer Jack Dragna, the "Capone of Los Angeles". There was no love lost between these two characters. But as Siegel was the representative of the powerful Luciano crime family and golden boy of the East Coast crime syndicate, Dragna was forced to give way after Lucky Luciano himself advised him that it would be in his "best interest" to defer to Siegel. As it turned out, it really was: Siegel immediately moved in on the LA bookmaking scene and 'convinced' bookies on his turf to pay tribute to Dragna, further lining his wallet.

Siegel also set up a Mexico-California drug trade, blackmailed Hollywood film companies by organising union strikes and 'borrowed' hundreds of thousands of dollars from celebrities he had befriended, safe in the knowledge they wouldn't ask a reputedly violent mobster for it back. These are stories for another time, though.

The upshot of all this criminal entrepreneurship was that by the time Siegel had begun pulling strings to build a hotel-casino in Vegas, he was an influential man on the West Coast with more than a few aces up his sleeve.

Siegel was very wealthy but most of his money was dirty. So, with some laundered seed capital from his friends in New York, he moved into suite 401 of the Last Frontier Hotel while he looked for a potentially profitable investment. The El Cortez Hotel & Casino was picked up for $600,000 in late 1945, and in July 1946, sold for $766,000. Not a bad return in six months at all, even for this high-rolling gangster.

Siegel's ambitions grew as he eyed up his next investment, which would see his name made synonymous with the most iconic (and controversial) hotel and casino in Las Vegas history. But for the first time in his criminal career, Bugsy would find the cards stacked against him.

Billy Wilkerson was a prominent Vegas nightclub owner who founded the *Hollywood Reporter*, an entertainment trade rag that he used to list suspected communist sympathisers (the foundation of what would be the infamous Hollywood blacklist). Wilkerson had picked up 13 hectares of cheap desert about a kilometre from the Last Frontier and was planning on building a more European style of hotel-casino, a class above the spit-and-sawdust saloons and tables of the old Strip. But iron, bricks and basic building materials had been sucked up by Uncle Sam during World War II and the construction business had far higher overheads than they had before the war. So Wilkerson quickly found himself in over his head and $400,000 short of finishing his dream. He sought investors and found an eager Benjamin Siegel, posing as a respectable businessman, with the cash and charm to win him and his 'investment partners' two-thirds of a stake in the project – the glitzy 'Flamingo Hotel and Casino',

"Breaking rules to get his way was second nature to Bugsy"



By the time this first mugshot of Bugsy was taken in 1928, the 22-year-old was already a wealthy Bootlegger



The Flamingo was already turning a profit when Siegel died, but its veneer of respectable gambling brought a higher class of punter and even bigger profits in the 1950s

From Mormon sanctuary to city of sin

1829
Discovery
Mexican merchant Antonio Armijo stumbles upon the valley with his caravan, while looking for a trade route to Los Angeles. He calls it Las Vegas, which means 'The Meadows' in Spanish.



1844
Army fort
In preparation for the war brewing with the Mexicans, John C Fremont is sent into the valley to gather forces and create an outpost fort that remains for a generation. Vegas's famous Fremont Street is named after him.



1855
Mormon fort
Years later, 29 Mormon missionaries from Utah led by William Billinghurst occupy the fort with the intention of making it a Mormon stronghold. It was abandoned a year later after finding difficulties surviving in the desert heat.

1881
'Las Vegas Rancho'
The fort changes hands a few times until Archibald Stewart is given it in lieu of a debt and his wife becomes its first postmaster. The land is irrigated and over the next decade farmers move in. Las Vegas is permanently settled.

1905
City
Las Vegas rapidly grows with the railroad that has been built to run through it bringing hundreds of settlers. It's finally made a city after 44 hectares of what is now downtown Vegas is snapped up by buyers.

supposedly named after Bugsy's leggy firebrand of a girlfriend, Virginia Hill. By the time Wilkerson realised exactly who his new partners were, it was too late to pull out.

During this time, and in the prelude to the second Red Scare, FBI Director John Edgar Hoover was focusing the efforts of the agency on political subversives. But he could hardly allow a high-profile mobster to gain a foothold in Vegas on his watch. Siegel was already under scrutiny, but Hoover wanted to up the ante. In a memorandum to the attorney general written on 18 July 1946, he put forward a case for more intense surveillance on the mafioso: "In the course of the above investigation, we have ascertained that Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel, notorious racketeer with underworld connections on the west and east coasts and Las Vegas, Nevada, will again visit the latter city within the next few days and reside at the Last Frontier Hotel there in Suite 401. As previously pointed out, we are desirous of following Siegel's widespread activities and, therefore are requesting authority to place a technical surveillance on his telephony at the Last Frontier Hotel which will be Las Vegas 1800. At this time, I also with [sic] to point out that Siegel, because of his far-flung interests, is almost in constant travel status, thereby making it extremely difficult at times to follow his activities and anticipate his movements. It is recommended, therefore, that authority be granted to cover any hotels, residences, or places of business which might be used by Siegel in his journeys throughout the country. I strongly feel that this type of coverage is necessary if we are to establish his racketeering connections."

The FBI was cleared to bug rooms and tap phones, and the Suite 401 phone tap proved particularly fruitful: Siegel was recorded discussing his interests in Vegas with the East Coast and his lieutenants. The FBI now had hard proof that the mob was looking to stick around. Still, the feds barely had any real case against him, so Hoover played a trump card that nearly bust Bugsy.

Walter Winchell was a big-time broadcaster with a popular 15-minute Sunday national radio gossip program, and on 14 July 1946, he exposed Siegel's hand to the nation with this simple statement: "According to the FBI, a prominent West Coast racketeer is endeavouring to muscle a prominent West Coast publisher out of his interest in a West Coast Hotel."

Siegel was livid. His attempt at legitimacy was being put into jeopardy along with the hotel, gambling and liquor licenses he was in the process of securing for the Flamingo. He had one of his men phone Winchell and put the heat on him and Winchell folded under the indirect wrath of an angry mob boss. "Winchell identified his source as the Director," so goes the FBI summary of the phone tap that took place in the "Boiler Room" of Las Vegas 2460, the "Las Vegas" club. "When he learned that Siegel and [CENSORED] were involved, exclaimed, 'God, what a mistake I made. I may have caused them (Siegel and [CENSORED]) to lose their hotel licenses'." The name censored by the FBI is thought to be that of a high-ranking member of the Chicago outfit.

The Suite 401 tap subsequently recorded a fuming Siegel making audacious statements to his girlfriend. "Let [him] tell me where he got it from," he spat, referring to none other than J Edgar Hoover, before he ranted on about having





Siegel's girlfriend, Virginia Hill: she had to appear before the Kefauver special committee in 1951, which was investigating organised crime across the USA

1910
Gambling outlawed
Nevada is the last state to ban gambling, even flipping a coin for a drink, from its bars and public places. But Vegas continues to prosper.

1931
Gambling legalised
After relaxing gaming laws over the previous few decades, gambling is finally decriminalised in the Silver State, and Nevada cities, including Vegas, become a boomtown for casinos.



1933
Siegel's Vegas
Bugsy first starts visiting California in the early 1930s after several attempts on his life back east. He has much of his business in Los Angeles at the time, but the casino scene in Vegas is an attractive one to the entrepreneurial crook.

1936
Hoover Dam built
It took five years and $49 million to build the Hoover Dam across the Colorado river. Workers are restricted from visiting Vegas while they are involved with its construction.

1947
Bugsy Siegel shot
After a disastrous opening, Benjamin Siegel is killed by an unknown hit man. He lived to experience just a taste of success with his hotel and casino, the Flamingo.



1951
Nuclear testing
The infamous Nevada test site opens with the first of more than 100 nuclear explosions. With a clear view from Vegas, the city's sky bars do a roaring trade in 'Atomic cocktails' with a view of the mushroom clouds.

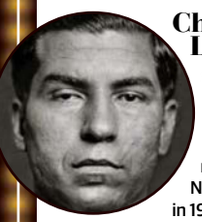
Friends in high places



Meyer Lansky

Mob 'accountant', New York

Bugsy and Meyer's history goes back to their teenage years when they met and formed a gang on the streets of New York, to protect themselves from Irish and Italian thugs. Lansky had always been the brains to Bugsy's brawn.



Charles 'Lucky' Luciano

Sicilian Godfather, New York (Italy)

With the help of Lansky and Siegel, Lucky decapitated the Sicilian regime in the US and formed the National Crime Syndicate. Deported in 1946, he continued to pull strings.



Al Capone

Former bootlegging boss, Chicago

Childhood friend Capone had syphilitic dementia and both his mental and physical health were in severe decline by the time the Flamingo opened, but Bugsy was still in contact with Capone's Chicago outfit.



Virginia Hill

Courier, Las Vegas

Not your average gangster's moll: Siegel's girlfriend was trouble – dating and ditching mobsters as she climbed a criminal career ladder. She was socially adroit and the Mafia recognised her networking skills, using her as a go-between.



George Raft

Actor/mobster wannabee, Los Angeles

George, brought up in 'Hell's Kitchen', was friends with Bugsy as a boy. He followed a different path, however, and became a major player in early 1940s Hollywood instead. He was typically cast as a gangster.



Jean Harlow

Actor/blonde bombshell, Los Angeles

Though she died the decade before the Flamingo at the age of 26, she lived long enough to befriend Siegel on one of his many early visits to California, and was godmother to his daughter, Millicent Siegel.



Louis B Mayer

Movie maker, Los Angeles

Louis Burt Mayer, the eponymous vice president of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film studio, might not have been as close to Siegel as some of his actors were, but Bugsy certainly shared social and 'business' interests with the movie producer.





Siegel was arrested in 1941 and tried for the murder of Harry Greenberg, who is suspected to have been killed by Murder Inc. for threatening to become an informant. The case fell apart when two key witnesses were also killed

his men bring Hoover to him and getting him to squeal about where he got his information from. A lot of bluster from a man known to have a short fuse, for sure. But when one of the most powerful and feared underworld figures in the United States threatens violence against the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, even empty threats are taken seriously. The conversation was duly detailed in three pages of typewritten memo by special agent A Rosen and airmailed to FBI headquarters in Washington.

Bugsy had been respected among his peers for being ballsy, but now he was overplaying his hand. At 9.30am on 21 July 1946, he sought to reassure Meyer Lansky: "Oh, the guy called me up. I knew I had something to tell you." Siegel concluded the conversation by passing the FBI situation off almost as an afterthought. "Last night, he read me a letter he just got from Winchell. He (Winchell) says in the longest day he never dreamt it was him or I. He said, 'I want you to understand that the other fellow is even a better friend than you are. I'd never done that in a million years. The man who I thought it was is [CENSORED].' He said, 'I went right back to my man that gave it to me,' and then it tells him it's Mr Hoover, you understand? And bowled the by-Jesus out of him. He says, 'I want you to tell my mutual friend that when I come out I will explain the whole thing,' you couldn't give me a million dollars to do that. He (Winchell) said I would never do that because he went on to tell him how it might have hurt me up here. But I found out that it's still him. So I'll tell you when I see you."

Perhaps, in the creation of his West Coast empire more than 3,000 kilometres from his bosses, Siegel had forgotten who he was working for, because Lansky's curt and guarded responses to Siegel suggested he wasn't buying it. Winchell later told Hoover that he never sent a letter of apology to anyone, so maybe the New York kingpin saw right through Siegel's bluff.

Still, Bugsy was to get away with a lot more before his East Coast partners called in their debts. Las Vegas summers can easily see the mercury slide north of 40 degrees Celsius and, by August 1946, Siegel was feeling the heat in the Mojave. His wire service, Trans-American, was experiencing difficulties and profits would slump for the next few months, leaving him to face another awkward phone call with Lansky. He was also in the process of a messy divorce with his first wife and the FBI was looking into getting him on a government fraud rap, as Siegel tried to get the Flamingo built as quickly and cheaply as possible. Bribing officials and breaking rules to get his way was second nature to Bugsy (after a bit of old fashioned thuggery, that is) and he'd been wriggling his way through the red tape of the Civilian Public Administration (CPA).

Apparently, the Las Vegas community didn't think much about a lavish new mobster-run hotel-casino in their midst, either. An angry Richard King wrote this article for the 1 August 1946 issue of the *Las Vegas Tribune*: "The Flamingo, giant gambling resort now under construction on Highway 91, at a cost estimated to reach the $3 million mark, promises to be the biggest and most elaborate club in the country. Under normal conditions, construction of this type may be tolerated and by many welcomed as an additional

Who killed Bugsy?

No one knows who whacked Siegel, but there are several parties who had good reason to want him dead

01 Mob 'housekeeping'

The infamous Havana conference of December 1946 brought the old world Cosa Nostra and US Mafia leaders together to discuss business, mob rules and settle any beef. Bugsy wasn't invited – partly because he had his hands full with the opening of the Flamingo. But there was another reason, some think: Luciano and company wanted to discuss what to do with the increasing cocky Siegel and the money pit he had built in the desert.

02 Pre-emptive strike

Bee Sedway, the wife of Siegel's lieutenant and partner in the Flamingo Moe Sedway, revealed in a recent interview that Siegel had threatened the life of her husband. He said, "I'll have Moe, chop his body up and feed it to the Flamingo Hotel's kitchen garbage disposal," after discovering that Moe was sending details of the Flamingo's botched accounts back to Lansky. Bee called her lover up, a lump of a man named Matthew 'Moose' Pandza, and begged him to protect her husband.

03 A woman spurned

Siegel and his girlfriend Virginia Hill had a tempestuous relationship. She was possessive and would fly into a jealous rage if Bugsy spoke to other women. She was as crooked as him, too, so when she left for Switzerland and withdrew $2.5 million Bugsy had deposited into a Swiss bank account, it didn't take the mob money men long to trace it back to the Flamingo. Was she covering her tracks?



Following Bugsy's death, business at the Flamingo picked up and by 1947, gaming tables such as this 'Bird Cage' were turning a nice profit

Bugsy's Rant

Incensed by Winchell, Siegel vents his anger to his girlfriend, unaware the FBI is listening

BUGSY SIEGEL: We'll make him bring Hoover in front of me and let that [redacted] tell me where he got it from... I said tell that dirty son of a [redacted] – you may say don't give me a licence here and we go in and spend 3 million dollars, every nickel we possess. He thinks it's Meyer and I in there... Winchell apologised 40 times, said I would never do a thing like that. He said all right, [redacted] you're a friend of mine but these two either fellows are dearer friends to me in there, he said, and me especially is a very dear friend of mine, wouldn't do a thing in the world to hurt him, said I want you to see the letter when you get back. Jesus Christ – but I know it all instigated from him see. He just have given it to him to give to Hoover, see. He called and said I get the letter just now, you should see the front of it – right there in front of what you call it, the senator, that contract we signed. Yeah but Winchell's liable to cop. I'll knock his [redacted] eyes out – just like this – God damned right... But now he's got this God damned letter a block long from Winchell.

VIRGINIA HILL: That means you won't get a licence?

SIEGEL: What?

HILL: What kind of licence honey?

SIEGEL: Say I came in after it and through him or something they refuse to give me a gambling licence, what am I gonna do with the hotel, stick it up my ass?

HILL: Well, why don't you get them? Then once you get them-

SIEGEL: Well, they always revoke them – get them, never mind about that, say whatever they want. If there is no connection in this town to get these things they can put you out of business, honey. Why to [sic] you think I work so much time with [redacted]? Give them money and this and that. Although it is legitimate business but still, you know, these [redacted] when you have a licence...

[call ends as the sound of a child entering the room can be heard]

[ends]



The last original structure of the Flamingo was torn down in 1993 and a garden built in its stead: despite Siegel's notoriety, he was given this memorial in recognition of his vision of the famous hotel


Finland Awarded 1952 Olympic Games

'BUGSY' SIEGEL MURDERED

Senate Labor Fight Rages on After All-Night Session

EXTRA

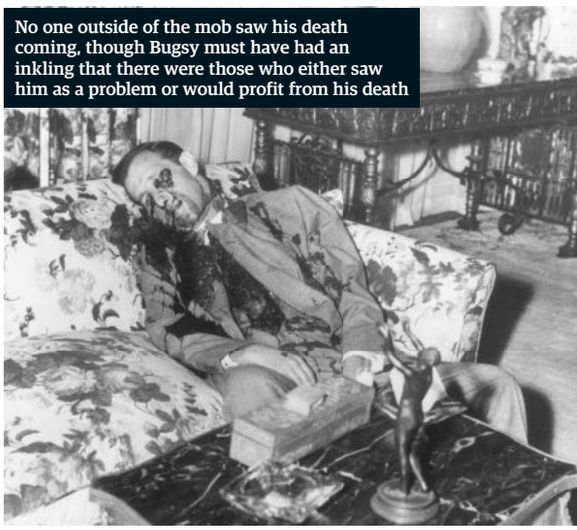
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Rubbed Out in Beverly Hills in Hail of Bullets

L. A. Fails To Get Games

The murder of one of the most feared gangsters in the country sparked decades of mystery about who pulled the trigger



No one outside of the mob saw his death coming, though Bugsy must have had an inkling that there were those who either saw him as a problem or would profit from his death

enterprise to put Las Vegas on the map. At present, however, construction of another gambling resort of such magnitude is causing much unfavorable comment, especially among veterans who have been trying vainly to purchase building materials for homes that they feel they are entitled to build for their families. Contractors and building supply houses state they do not have any materials to build homes. But, somehow, builders of gambling clubs seem to have no trouble whatsoever getting anything they want..."

That $3 million (more than $36 million today) turned out to be a conservative estimate. Problem was, while Siegel had the right idea of a glamorous Vegas with the mob running the show, he wasn't the right guy to execute this vision. He skimmed money off anywhere he could, even as his own construction crew moved expensive building materials in through one door and out the other, only to sell it back to the project the next day. His budget was beginning to spiral out of control, Clark County was denying his gambling and liquor licenses, and the feds were now investigating him for bribery. Apparently, Siegel was wryly bribing CPA officials with beer.

It took another four months before he finally got his licenses in order, and the Flamingo Hotel and Casino could open to a bumpy start. Siegel wanted an early launch to recoup revenue for what was threatening to be a $6 million white elephant, but the hotel was unfinished and fate paid a cruel part in the 26 December 1946 flop. Lightning had prevented planes full of keen gamblers from taking off in Los Angeles, so many of Siegel's guests didn't arrive. Guest suites hadn't been completed yet either, so when the entertainment – which included comedian and musician Jimmy Durante and the Xavier Cugat band – for the 'West's Greatest Resort Hotel' concluded, guests and punters returned to rival Vegas casinos where they were able to gamble and drink all night before retiring to their suites.

A storm was brewing back east, too. Siegel's old friend Lansky was holding the Cosa Nostra at bay, but his investors were growing impatient. The Flamingo had to close again just a month later, but reopened in March 1947, and by May, it was finally in profit to the tune of $250,000.

Some suspect that this was too little, too late for Bugsy. On the evening of 20 June 1947, the casino don was reading the newspaper in the living room of Virginia Hill's mansion in Los Angeles when an unknown assassin fired a volley from a military carbine, striking him twice in the right side of his head. In a gruesome twist, the newspapers made much of the fact that Siegel's left eyeball had been blown out of the socket and was found on the far side of the room.

The fate of the Flamingo and the mob's future in Vegas mirrored that of Bugsy's. Lansky took over management of the luxury hotel, its success was ensured and the mob made a killing skimming off the weekly take. Who'd have thought? Turns out, Bugsy was right about the place all along. The years that followed would see the Cuban Revolution oust the Mafia from their casino interests in Havana and the US turn to the Bright Light City for its kicks, where Lansky and his associates were already casting long shadows in the desert.

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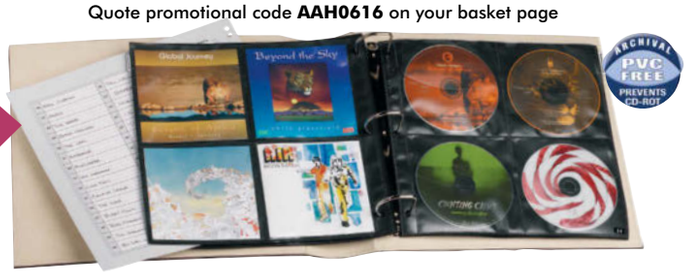
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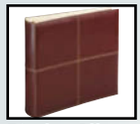
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REVIEWS

All About History on the books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world

THE LAST DAYS OF STALIN

Inside a dictator's dying days

Author Joshua Rubenstein **Publisher** Yale University Press **Price** £25 **Released** Out now

If there ever was a case of poetic justice, it is that of Josef Stalin's death. His own doctors were apprehensive about approaching him, such was the level of fear surrounding the dictator – getting on his wrong side could mean death. Following this, his last moments were painful, as he succumbed to the symptoms of a stroke that finished off one of history's most notorious dictators once and for all.

Unconventionally, this is where Joshua Rubenstein's *The Last Days Of Stalin* begins, tracing his past backwards as it follows the Russian premiere's activities in the years following the end of World War II, charting his activities and examining what might have been. Inevitably, the answer to this question is 'things would have become a hell of a lot worse.' Having suspended the Purges that started pre-World War II (and indeed almost cost him victory), Stalin simply continued with what had gone on before, fostering the climate of fear that he had shrouded the country with.

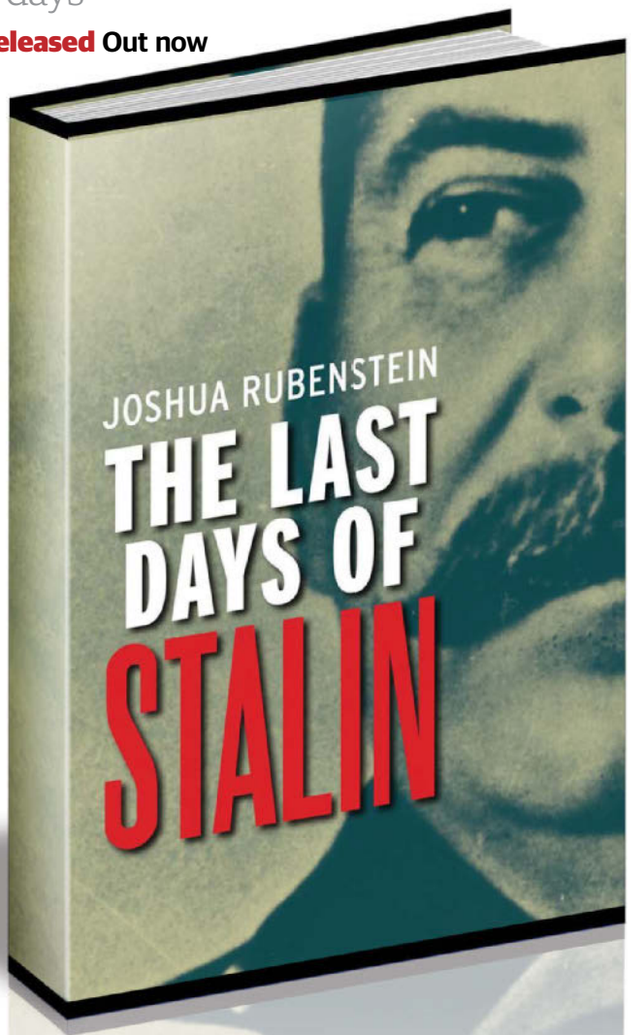
To this end, Rubenstein examines the reactions of inner circle members like Georgy Malenkov, Lavrenti Beria, Nikolai Bulganin and future leader Nikita Khrushchev – all potential successors to Stalin – but at the same time is cautious in examining the mood of the country following his demise. These people likely weren't earmarked by Stalin as his next in line, they were simply fellow leaders he hadn't got round to offing yet. Had he remained, they would have likely followed in the footsteps of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Bukharin at some point.

Elsewhere, Stalin's growing campaign of hatred against the Jewish population is put under the microscope. Although the nature of his personal prejudices will never be known for certain, nor the extent of what he had planned for them (though there are some that point towards the construction of various camps as proof that more was in store), it can't be denied that his treatment of them erred dangerously close to that of Adolf Hitler's in World War II.

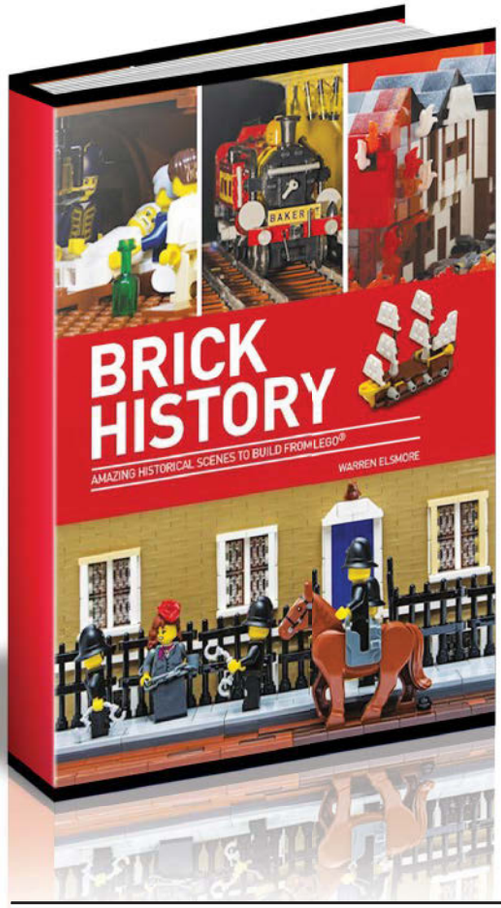
More than anything else, this book highlights what a dangerous prospect Stalin's rule would have been had he survived longer. The prospect of him in charge rather than relative moderates like Khrushchev or Mikhail Gorbachev during some of the more prickly engagements of the Cold War is a chilling one – with the at-best-cautious and at-worst-ambiguous US reception to the dictator's death saying everything about how frosty relations were between the two nations.

Rubenstein's book isn't a long one, but crucially it feels like it covers a lot of ground. Although it doesn't pretend to paint a complete picture of Stalin's life, it nonetheless does a great job of summarising a relatively underwritten stage of his history, in the process capturing the zeitgeist as one era ended and another one commenced directly in its wake. Things may not exactly have become massively better, but they could hardly have been worse.

In short, *The Last Days Of Stalin* is a great read for both enthusiasts of Russian history and those looking to learn more about this particular subject matter.



"This book highlights what a dangerous prospect Stalin's rule would have been had he survived longer"



BRICK HISTORY: AMAZING SCENES TO BUILD FROM LEGO

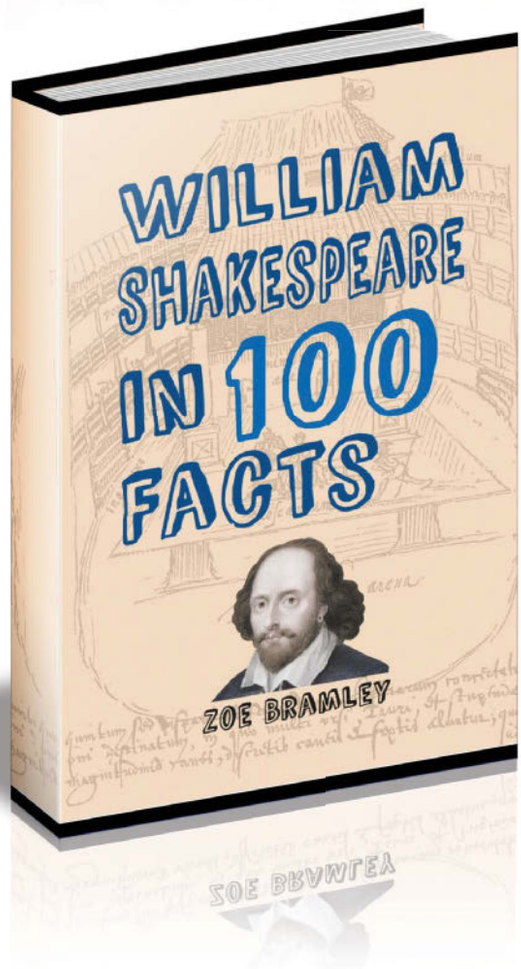
History like you've never seen it before

Author Warren Elsmore **Publisher** The History Press
Price £14.99 **Released** Out now

History can be retold in many ways, but judging by this superb book, Lego might well be the best medium of all. The fourth in a series that also includes *Brick City*, *Brick Wonders* and *Brick Vehicles*, *Brick History* is the best of the bunch.

Warren Elsmore's book includes 60 key moments from history ranging from the beginning of the universe with the Big Bang to the 2011 Royal Wedding. The fun release is as educational as it is entertaining and comes complete with a small description on each of the events so you can learn as you go along. The book isn't meant to be read cover to cover in one go and includes pointers on how to create these little bits of history for yourself. This makes *Brick History* an accessible and all-round excellent release that appeals as much to those mad for Lego as it does to fans of history.

Elsmore's book will no doubt give readers the itch to try some of the designs themselves. Most challenging could well be the incredibly detailed Pilgrim Father's Mayflower, but by far our favourite is the recreation of the Battle of Hastings. Who knew little cheeky Saxon Lego faces could be so satisfying? Most impressive though is the book's eye for detail. Clearly a lot of time and effort has been put into the moments included, and every famous event like the Apollo 11 Moon landing and the Battle of Waterloo is contrasted by less well-known moments in history like the invention of the Gutenberg Printing Press or the construction of the Panama Canal. *Brick History* will make you fall in love with your childhood Lego models all over again, and the main question to take away from this release is, "Why has no one ever thought of doing this before?" We absolutely love it.



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE IN 100 FACTS

There are some weird and wonderful things that you don't know about the Bard

Author Zoe Bramley **Publisher** Amberley **Price** £7.99 **Released** Out now

You think you know good old Bill Shakespeare, and for all intents and purposes, knowing that he was a playwright over 400 years ago who has influenced the current school curriculum and endless theatre performances across the globe will get you pretty far. But is that really all there is to know about Shakespeare?

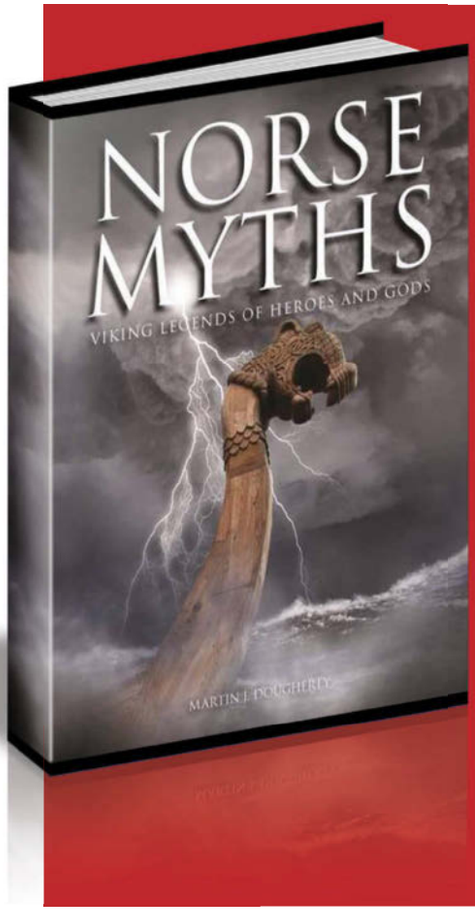
Bramley explores 100 sides of the bard that you may, but most likely don't, know. It's a fun and highly accessible read that should come highly recommended for students currently studying his works who want a break from the dry, and not remotely entertaining, way that so many teachers approach the subject.

You may expect 100 facts about Shakespeare to include such normal titbits such as, "The Globe has 14 sides because it reflects sound the best," or, "He didn't write all of his plays," and indeed some of the facts in this list of 100 are ones that you may have heard before. It's unlucky to say Macbeth in the theatre, you know? Most people do.

But it also includes facts such as he knew Guy Fawkes, he evaded his taxes, and his geography was actually quite terrible. It doesn't stop at the mundane though, there are fun tales of the one night he ended up sleeping drunkenly under a tree, and he got the idea for the three witches from three boys at Oxford.

It may not wholly break new ground, but *William Shakespeare In 100 Facts* is a fun and interesting read for both those who consider themselves fans of the Bard and those looking to find a new way to study him.

And remember, the next time you wake up with little recollection of how you got where you are, old Bill did it first.



NORSE MYTHS:
VIKING LEGENDS OF HEROES AND GODS

Discover how the stories of the infamous men of the North began, and how they permeated into pop culture

Author Martin J Dougherty **Publisher** Amber Books **Price** £19.99 **Released** Out now

Viking mythology has lasted through the ages, and is still prevalent in popular culture today. In Dougherty's book *Norse Myths*, he attempts to find out why these stories are as immortal as the gods they portray. While the saying "Never judge a book by its cover" is probably as old as the myth that Vikings wore horns on their helmets, we couldn't help but raise an eyebrow at the fantasy-esque hardcover for this particular book. The thunder and lightning backdrop for a menacing dragon's head of a Viking boat was a little old fashioned, but it was a complete misrepresentation of the stylish and accessible writing within.

The writing is so modern, in fact, that you can find references to current Marvel films and *The Lord Of The Rings* in Dougherty's analysis of Viking icons in modern pop culture. The book also explores the origins of Viking myths and sagas, and analyses the cultural aspects of their religion and how it linked into cultures in neighbouring countries at the time it was practiced. Viking legends are epic and enthralling by nature, with tales of giants (Jotnar) and dwarfs, trickster gods, powerful spirits of fate and destiny (the Norn), elves and dragons, a great tree that connects the different dimensions (Yggdrasil), as well as a magical cow. The gods and their powers, way of life, and shifts in representation throughout Norse mythology are described in great detail, supported by lavish artwork and maps, and it's hard to stop reading once you become invested in their magical lives.

It's surprising then, that the author's background is not in history and mythology – Dougherty was a defence consultant and the bulk of his publications are on self-defence and modern military technology. Nevertheless, this truly is an exploration of Viking culture that everyone can enjoy, and probably should – how else are you going to understand the next *Avengers* film?

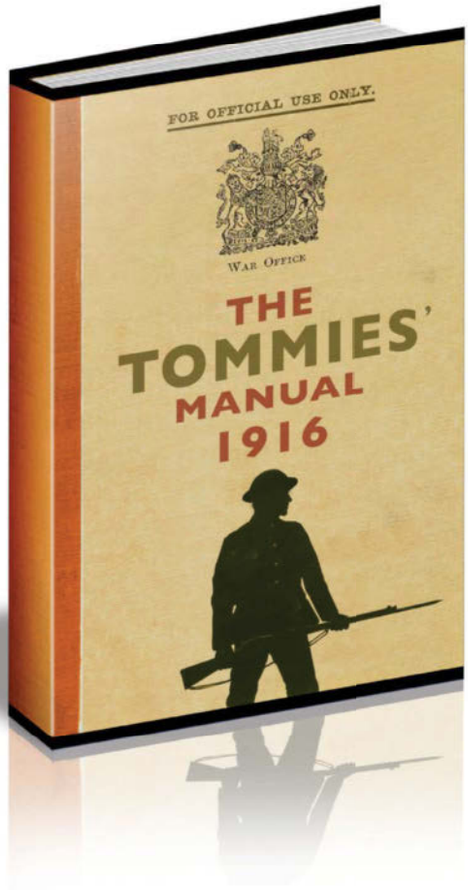
HISTORY of WAR RECOMMENDS...

The Oxford Illustrated History Of The First World War

Author: Hew Strachan **Price:** £18.99 **Publisher:** Oxford University



The horrors of World War I are well known, etched into the imagination through a myriad of books, films and plays. Refreshingly, this book does not simply revisit the commonly known timeline, it delves into its origins, the aims of its participants and the world they left behind. This elegant, superbly compiled book concludes by studying how World War II altered the recollection of its predecessor, before looking at how we remember the fallen soldiers today.



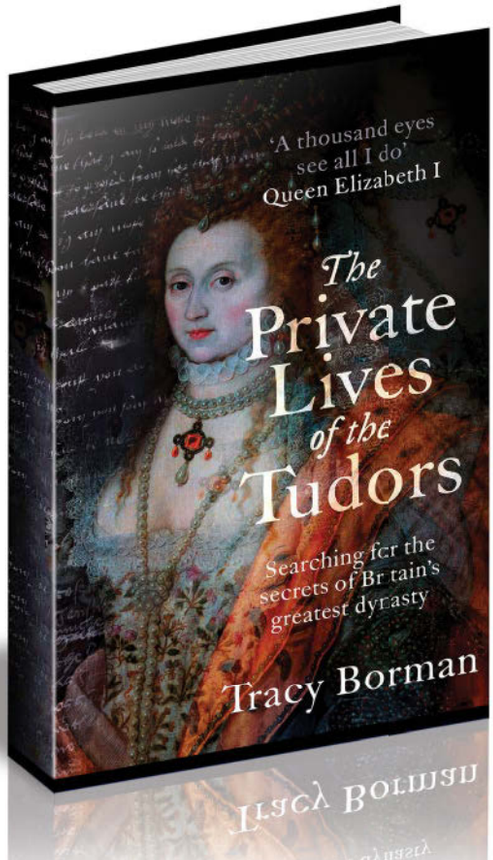
THE TOMMIES' MANUAL 1916

Everything a British Tommy needs to know about trench warfare

Author Hannah Holman **Publisher** Amberley **Price** £9.99 **Released** Out now

With the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme being commemorated this year, it is an excellent time to reflect on the ordinary men sent to fight in this brutal conflict. As thousands of conscripts crossed the Channel to Europe, the Army Printing and Stationary service began producing wartime instruction manuals. For this book, Hannah Holman has searched through hundreds of such manuals and collated them into a single volume. They give the reader a taste of the plethora of information issued to frontline troops during the war and go some way to imagining what life would have been like on the Western Front.

In a way, the book also serves to dispel the myth of 'lions led by donkeys'. With this amount of information available, it seems that every conceivable trench warfare tactic was thought of and discussed. Modern technology such as machine guns are covered in depth, from their operation to how they should be deployed on the battlefield or in the trench system. Need to know how to construct a trench, distinguish a friendly aircraft from an enemy or put a gas mask on a horse? This book has you covered.



THE PRIVATE LIVES OF THE TUDORS

Airing the dirty laundry of the Tudor monarchs

Author Tracy Borman **Publisher** Hodder & Stoughton **Price** £20 **Released** Out now

Renowned for scandal at court, love affairs and brutal beheadings, the Tudors are unrivalled in popularity among all of history's monarchs. In her latest release, bestselling author Tracy Borman sheds light on the daily lives of the most notorious kings and queens.

If you're expecting dirt on Henry VIII, the fetishes of Arthur, Prince of Wales, or the trysts of Elizabeth I, however, you'll be sorely disappointed. While the review sample of one chapter certainly dished the dirt on Henry VIII, it was in the form of his laundry habits. Discussing the bathing ritual of the monarch, plus how his wardrobe was kept from smelling, it's an intensely thorough dive into the mundane life of Britain's infamous king. The juicier side of Henry VIII comes later in the chapter, however, in which Borman describes the contemporary view on masturbation and Henry's sex habits. It's a tragically short section of the chapter, but if you want to get your fix of Tudor rumpy pumpy then there are plenty of other books available, such as Amy Licence's *In Bed With The Tudors*.

To complain about the banality of *The Private Lives Of The Tudors*, however, would be unfair – after all, only one chapter of the book itself was available to review, and Borman claims to cover Bloody Mary's phantom pregnancies, Elizabeth I's broken body and plenty of other Tudor secrets.

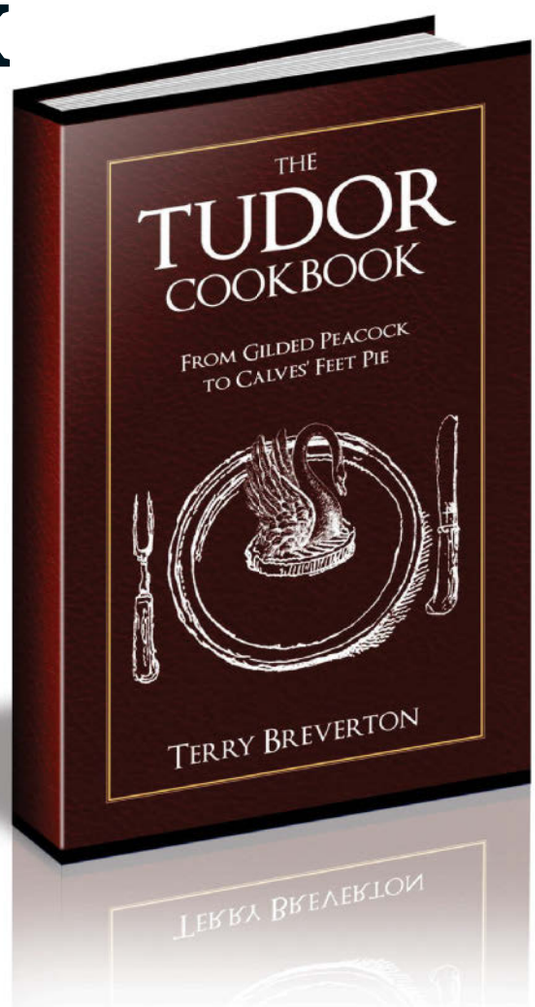
There's no denying the skill and the sheer amount of research that's been done for this book, either. Pages feature footnote references and the range of sources is extraordinary, from contemporary writings to chronicles, inventories and more recent interpretations.

Perhaps it was simply an unlucky choice of chapter to review. Perhaps it's a misleading book title. From reviewing one chapter, it's hard to see the work matching up to the name – yet there's hope. The promise of fascinating Tudor secrets is incentive enough to make the full book appealing.

THE TUDOR COOKBOOK

Do you love the Tudors? Do you equally love cooking? Is your love for cooking and the Tudors eclipsed by your hate for swans? You're in luck

Author Terry Breverton **Publisher** Amberley **Price** £9.99 **Released** Out now



The time of the Tudors was a golden age for culinary wonders, featuring such delights as pigeon pies, white pease pottage and capon brains (stamped fine in a mortar, combined with blanched almonds and rosewater and spiced with cinnamon, ginger and sugar, of course). *The Tudor Cookbook* follows the publisher's previous foray into historical cooking, *The Great War Cook Book*, and collates real dishes from cookbooks of old, such as *The Good Huswifes Juwell* from 1596.

The meals, ranging from main courses to desserts (and home remedies) can all be recreated in a modern kitchen – but that's not to say they should be. We'd love to see how "Cock brains and almond broth" does on *Come Dine With Me*. Some of them are not entirely legal either – we don't recommend the roasted swan.

The instructions for the recipes range from the peculiar to the outright hilarious (for example, "For to seth a pyke. Kill it in the head."). Needless to say, the book is not suitable for vegetarians, or really anyone who gets queasy at the sights of entrails.

Humorous descriptions aside, the Tudor period was an exceptionally interesting time for the food the English were eating, as it saw the import of previously unheard of foods from the New World (there's even a couscous recipe tucked away inside). It's an interesting look at domestic life, but really it's mostly valuable to those who are already invested in Tudor literature and want to expand their collection, as added introductions do provide a context for all the broth and black pudding.

So, will this cookbook be a handy addition to your kitchen shelves? Not in the slightest. Is it a useful insight into Tudor culture and living? Occasionally. Or is it rather just a silly bit of fun to put on your book shelf after a few recipes? Most likely.



Five minutes with ANDREW BAINES

WE SPEAK TO PORTSMOUTH HISTORIC DOCKYARD'S HEAD OF HISTORIC SHIPS ABOUT THE PRESERVATION OF HMS VICTORY

How different does the HMS Victory look in its new Georgian style, both inside and out?
The new paint scheme is a radical departure from HMS Victory's appearance of the past 30 years. The use of dark stains and varnishes on timbers – Victorian in style – has been replaced with muted pastel shades in spaces such as the Great Cabin and Hardy's cabin, while the strong mustard colour of the ship's hull has become much more muted in its move to a pale ochre.

What battles was Victory taking part in when it had this colour scheme? Why was it coloured this way?
We now display Victory as it appeared at the time of Trafalgar – between 14 September and 22 October 1805 – so this is as close as we can get it to its colour scheme at the battle. The ship's appearance was largely a balance between government parsimony, style and the choices made by individual captains. The government paid for the cheapest paints available, which were lead white, black and yellow ochre. By the early 1800s, it was very common to paint the ship's hull in alternating bands of ochre and black. Ochre, however, was a very drab colour and so was frequently lightened by mixing with white lead. Nelson introduced the practice of painting the lids of the gun ports black when on a strake of ochre, giving the famous 'Nelson Chequer'. We know that captains of other ships in the fleet, such as Captain Duff of the Mars, copied this style when Victory arrived off Cadiz in late September 1805.

What does the new visitor route involve?
For the first time ever, visitors will be able to ascend on to the Poop Deck and see stunning views of the naval base and surrounding Historic Dockyard. They will also be able to walk around Nelson's Great Cabin, access the carpenter and bosun's store and see Captain Hardy's cabin displayed for the very first time as the working accommodation of a captain. The length of the visitor route on board has been increased by as much as 80 per cent, accessing areas that were previously unseen.

How will members of the public get to "experience HMS Victory through Nelson's eyes"?
By returning Victory to the colours with which Nelson was familiar, and creating accurate replicas of the furniture Nelson used on board to dress the ship, we are giving a much more accurate impression of life on board Victory when it was his flagship.

Were conditions on board Victory really as bad as we think they were?
Undoubtedly conditions in Nelson's navy were better than the oft quoted 'rum, sodomy and the lash'. Punishment was far less strict than encountered in the army, the men were well fed and reasonably well paid, and while there was discipline, this was generally accepted as necessary in managing a ship like Victory, which had a crew of 821 in October 1805. By today's standards, life was hard in the navy, but it was for many ashore. The men on board Victory had good food, a roof over their head, medical provision and a pension – Greenwich Pensioners were the navy's equivalent to the British Army's Chelsea Pensioner.

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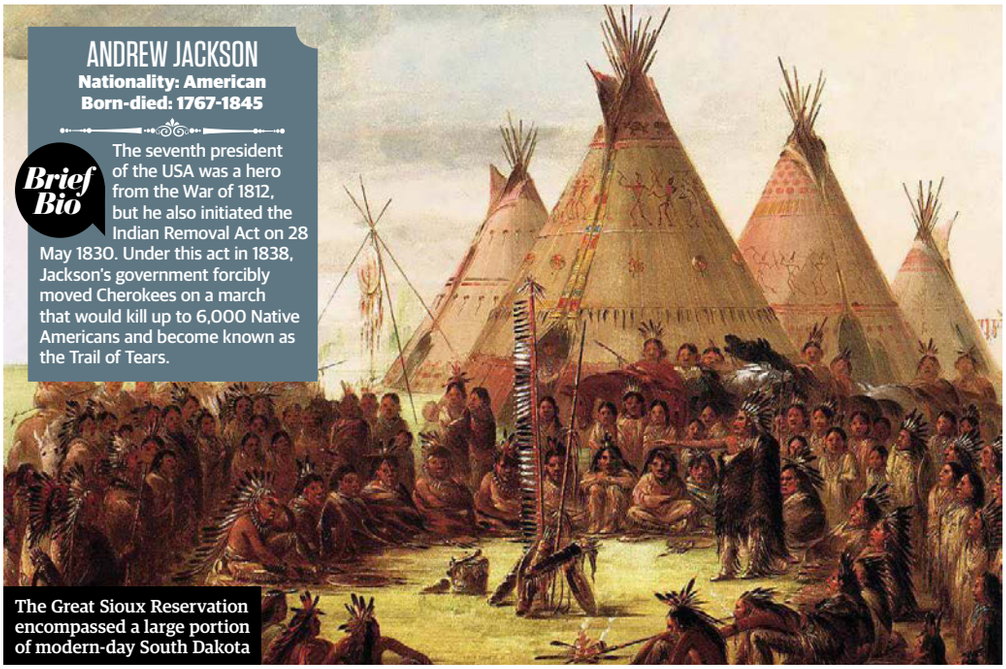
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ANDREW JACKSON
Nationality: American
Born-died: 1767-1845

Brief Bio

The seventh president of the USA was a hero from the War of 1812, but he also initiated the Indian Removal Act on 28 May 1830. Under this act in 1838, Jackson's government forcibly moved Cherokees on a march that would kill up to 6,000 Native Americans and become known as the Trail of Tears.

The Great Sioux Reservation encompassed a large portion of modern-day South Dakota

What was life like on Native American reservations?

Vince Jones

To help nullify the Native American threat during the Plains Wars, the white settlers forcibly removed them from their homelands and onto specially made reservations. This policy began in 1830 with the Indian Removal Act, and 80,000 Native Americans were transported west of the Mississippi River. The conditions were woeful, with these formally nomadic tribes placed on lands completely unsuitable for their way of life. The Dawes Act of 1887 tried to change things by giving 65 hectares of land to each Native American family, but this was unsuccessful as the tribe leaders insisted on communal land and they had no desire to farm in the way the US government wanted them to.

Along with the killing of the buffalo (now known to actually be a type of bison), the reservations helped end the traditional Native American way of life. As more settlers went west, the reservations were made even smaller, putting tribes in direct conflict with each other for land and supplies. It was clear that the Native Americans could not last here and the system broke their resolve. The reservations still exist but there have been a series of reforms aimed at making them a more hospitable environment.

What was the Reconquista?

Morgan Preece

At the start of the Middle Ages, the Iberian Peninsula was mostly ruled by the Muslim Moors. As time went on, Christian kingdoms began to reclaim what is now Spain and Portugal, and the wars raged for centuries.

The Moors first appeared on the peninsula in the year 711, crossing over the Mediterranean from Africa as part of the Umayyad Caliphate, conquering Visigoth lands in the process. Their advance was halted at Charlemagne's Carolingian Empire and the first significant Christian response was in 718 when a Muslim army was defeated at the Battle of Covadonga. The struggle for control went on and the conflict soon became a holy war. The Christians slowly but surely gained the upper hand and the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile were born. Andalusia was the last Muslim realm to fall in the 13th century and Spain was eventually united under Christian rule in 1469.



The fall of Granada in 1492 came after a valiant last stand by the Moors who occupied the city

This day in history 26 May

946 — Edmund I murdered
The king of England is assassinated on St Augustine's Day by an exiled thief named Leofa. The event is believed to have been a political assassination and took place at Pucklechurch in South Gloucestershire.

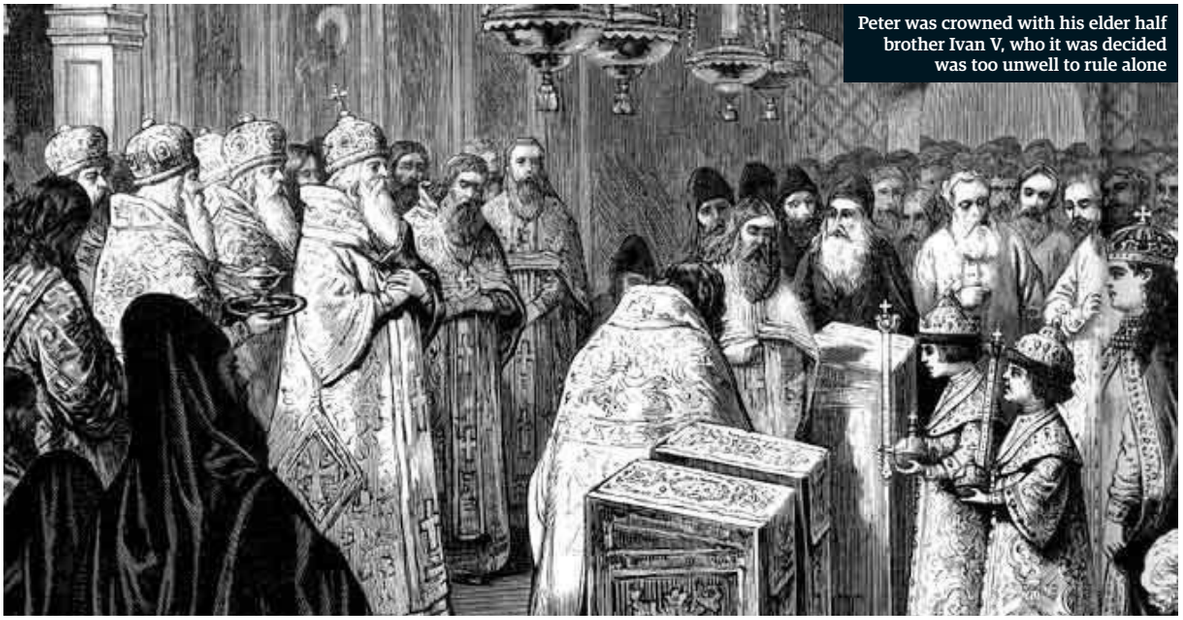
1647 — Alse Young executed
Connecticut becomes the scene of the first ever execution for witchcraft in the Thirteen American colonies as Alse Young is hung in Hartford. Being a witch continues to be punishable by death until 1715.

1770 — Orlov Revolt
Prior to the Greek War of Independence, an uprising is instigated by Alexei Orlov, a Russian Navy commander. The revolt helps the Russians in their war against the Ottomans but for the Greeks, it ends on this day as a failure.



1805 — Napoleon made king of Italy
The French emperor is crowned in Milan cathedral in between the Wars of the Second and Third Coalitions. As Napoleon went on to conquer Europe, his stepson Eugène de Beauharnais would rule in his stead as viceroy





Peter was crowned with his elder half brother Ivan V, who it was decided was too unwell to rule alone

Who was Peter the Great?

Sophie Price

Peter the Great is one of the most important people in Russian history. Tsar from the tender age of ten, during his reign he modernised Russia into a world-leading power. He achieved this through a series of reforms that helped equal the western standards of the time. He is also credited with improving the army and creating Russia's first ever navy. This helped him conduct a series of wars, and conquests into Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Turkey followed. The city of Saint Petersburg was named after him and he is remembered fondly, however, his high taxes and suppressive rule didn't please everyone.



Franz Kafka's writings were influenced by socialism as well as his difficult relationship with his father

What does Kafkaesque mean?

Petra Elliot

Kafkaesque means anything that resembles the themes of Czech author Franz Kafka. The style of his work is known for being surreal yet realistic and his best known titles are *The Metamorphosis* and *A Hunger Artist*. Both of these works deal with marginalisation in society and a feeling of hope against adversity in the 20th century. The idea of being Kafkaesque is when a person feels powerless or cannot understand the control being heaped on them from above.

YOUR TWEETS

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I'm super pleased to be chatting about crazy assassination plots in **@AboutHistoryMag** this month! **#twitterstorians @MadameGilflurt**

Delighted for my son, Jordan, who has had an article he wrote published in **@About HistoryMag!** A happy lad tonight!
@JMcKerrecher

We're on YOUTUBE

Discover the top five facts about one of the greatest military minds of all time, Alexander the Great, on the **History Answers** YouTube channel



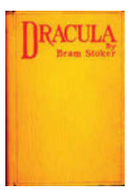
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Find out about the Nazi's brother who was just as important as Schindler...
historyanswers.co.uk

1897

***Dracula* published**
Irish author Bram Stoker releases what would become his most famous work. The 390-page hardcover would become a staple in the Gothic Horror genre and is supposedly based on the Transylvanian Vlad the Impaler.



1900

Battle of Palonegro
One of the bloodiest battles in Colombian history, Palonegro was part of a civil war known as the Thousand Days' War. It was an ideological conflict between liberals and conservatives and as many as 4,000 died in this battle alone.

1940

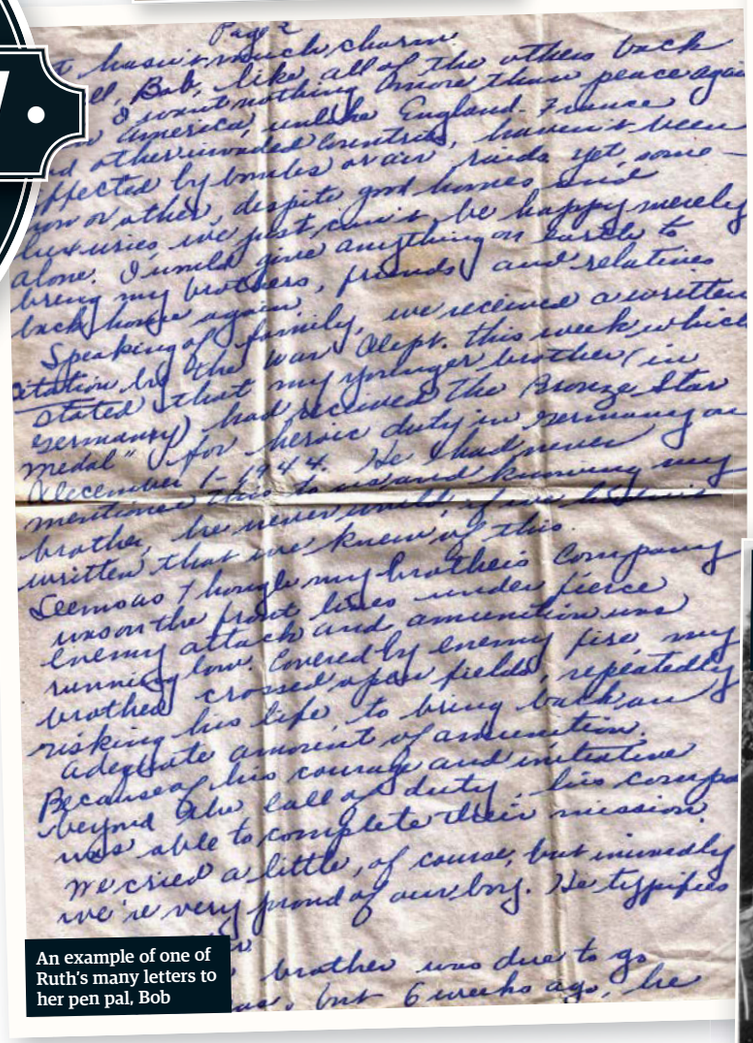
Operation Dynamo begins
The ten-day operation to save the stricken British Expeditionary Force at Dunkirk gets under way. As well as the Royal Navy, many civilian 'Little Ships' set sail from England to reach the soldiers before the Wehrmacht.

1992

The Blockade of Dubrovnik broken
The Yugoslav People's Army lays siege to the Croatian city from November until May. Somehow, the Medieval defences hold strong and the blockade is ended.



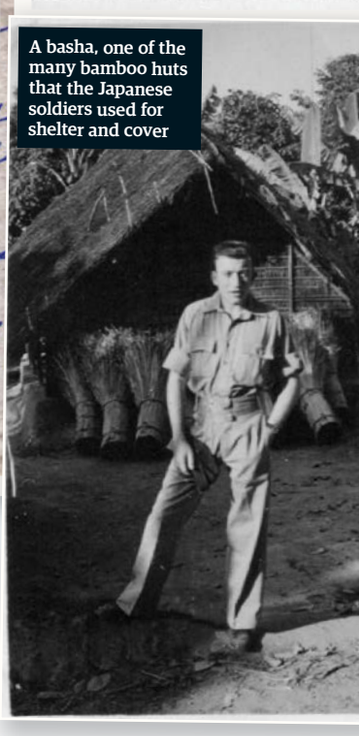
Letters from the jungles of Burma



An example of one of Ruth's many letters to her pen pal, Bob



Bob poses next to a Hawker Hurricane that didn't make the best of landings



A basha, one of the many bamboo huts that the Japanese soldiers used for shelter and cover

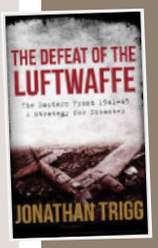


Maria C Sumner

During an encounter with old photographs and accumulated family objets d'art while tidying the loft, I made a surprising discovery of wartime pen pal letters. Treasured in a box of my dad's war memorabilia, they looked as crisp and as legible as the day he had first read them. They were written during 1945 while dad was serving in India and Burma. The sender, Ruth, was writing from the United States of America. They had never met but had been put in contact with each other after Ruth had rejected a man who was after her affections and in turn he retaliated by sending her address to the armed forces. My dad Robert 'Bob' Sumner was a sprightly, jovial and communicative RAF Corporal Liberator aircraft mechanic. They were both 23 years of age.

The happy and cheery written style would have made dad delighted to receive and read them. He kept them for 37 years up until his death and they were taken through India, Burma, South Africa and back to England during some of the most horrific fighting imaginable. Bob served in the Pacific Theatre throughout World War II, an experience that he reflected upon when the mood took him. He told us of how a Ghurkha patrol saved his life while he was on night guard duty in a trench. He was glad that he had laced his boots correctly and

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Letters from the past
Old correspondence can hold a wealth of historical info and fascinating stories

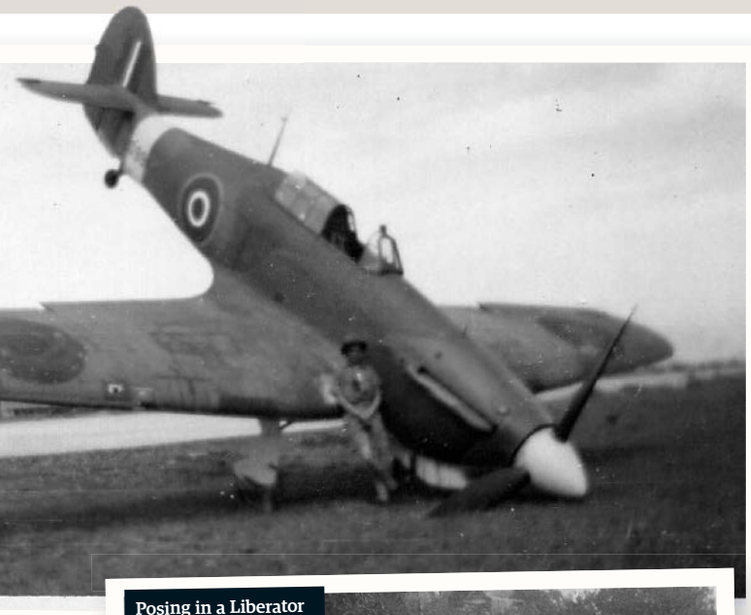
News clippings
Articles reporting on iconic events

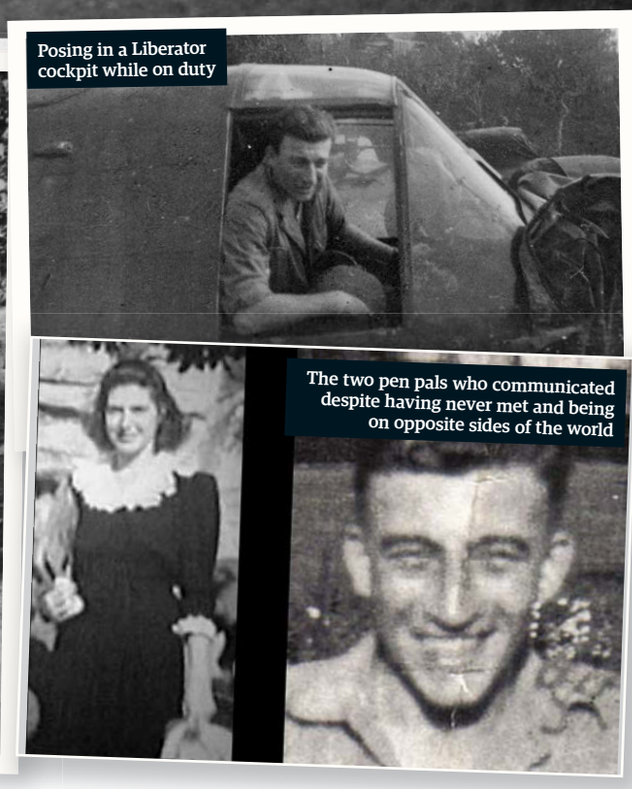
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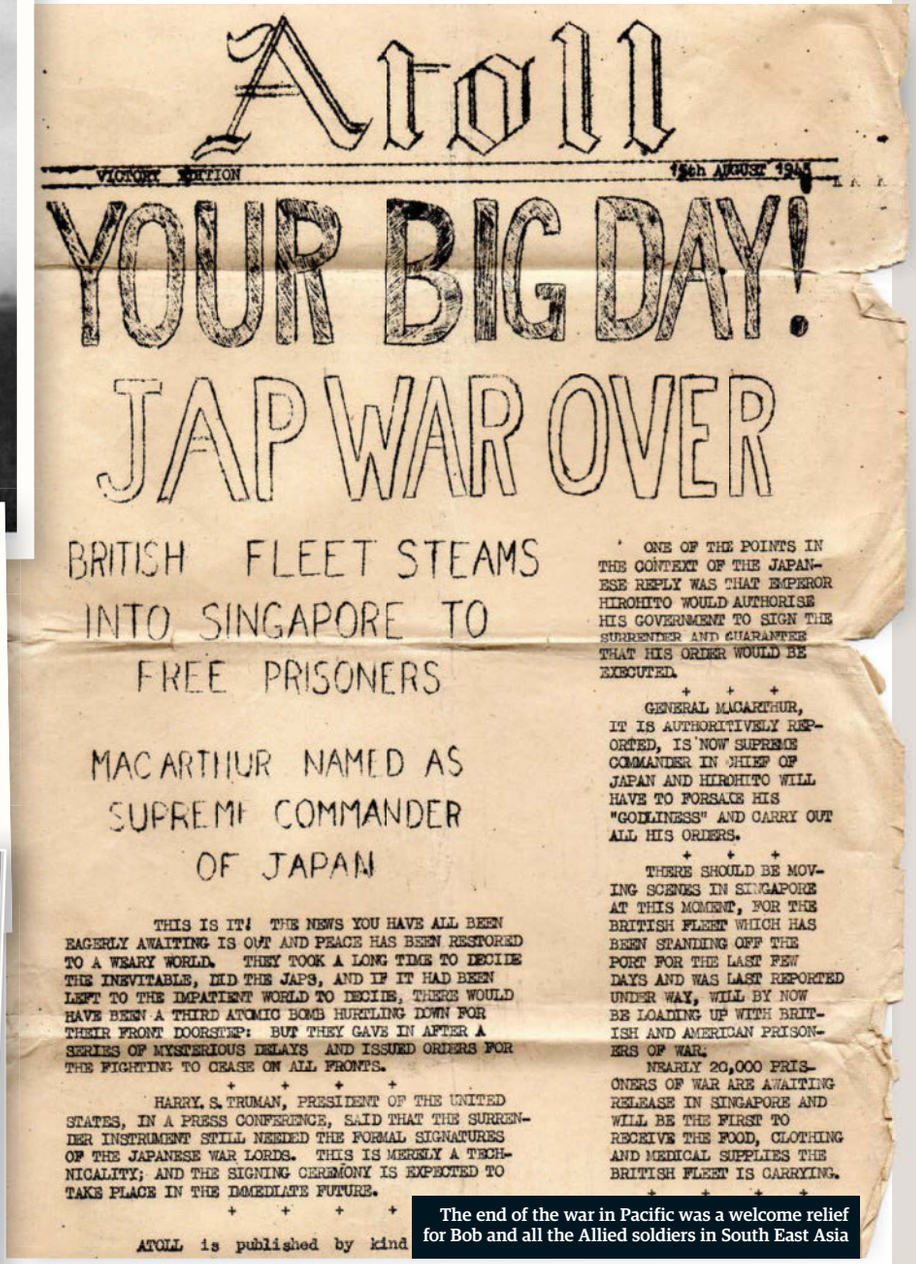




Posing in a Liberator cockpit while on duty



The two pen pals who communicated despite having never met and being on opposite sides of the world



Atoll

VICTORY EDITION — 15th AUGUST 1945

YOUR BIG DAY!

JAP WAR OVER

BRITISH FLEET STEAMS INTO SINGAPORE TO FREE PRISONERS

MACARTHUR NAMED AS SUPREME COMMANDER OF JAPAN

THIS IS IT! THE NEWS YOU HAVE ALL BEEN EAGERLY AWAITING IS OUT AND PEACE HAS BEEN RESTORED TO A WEARY WORLD. THEY TOOK A LONG TIME TO DECIDE THE INEVITABLE, DID THE JAPS, AND IF IT HAD BEEN LEFT TO THE IMPATIENT WORLD TO DECIDE, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN A THIRD ATOMIC BOMB HURTLING DOWN FOR THEIR FRONT DOORSTEP: BUT THEY GAVE IN AFTER A SERIES OF MYSTERIOUS DELAYS AND ISSUED ORDERS FOR THE FIGHTING TO CEASE ON ALL FRONTS.

+ + + +

HARRY S. TRUMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, IN A PRESS CONFERENCE, SAID THAT THE SURRENDER INSTRUMENT STILL NEEDED THE FORMAL SIGNATURES OF THE JAPANESE WAR LORDS. THIS IS MERELY A TECHNICALITY; AND THE SIGNING CEREMONY IS EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

+ + + +

ATOLL is published by kind

ONE OF THE POINTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE JAPANESE REPLY WAS THAT EMPEROR HIROHITO WOULD AUTHORISE HIS GOVERNMENT TO SIGN THE SURRENDER AND GUARANTEE THAT HIS ORDER WOULD BE EXECUTED.

+ + +

GENERAL MACARTHUR, IT IS AUTHORITIVELY REPORTED, IS NOW SUPREME COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF JAPAN AND HIROHITO WILL HAVE TO FORSAKE HIS "GODLINESS" AND CARRY OUT ALL HIS ORDERS.

+ + +

THERE SHOULD BE MOVING SCENES IN SINGAPORE AT THIS MOMENT, FOR THE BRITISH FLEET WHICH HAS BEEN STANDING OFF THE PORT FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS AND WAS LAST REPORTED UNDER WAY, WILL BY NOW BE LOADING UP WITH BRITISH AND AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR.

NEARLY 20,000 PRISONERS OF WAR ARE AWAITING RELEASE IN SINGAPORE AND WILL BE THE FIRST TO RECEIVE THE FOOD, CLOTHING AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES THE BRITISH FLEET IS CARRYING.

+ + + +

The end of the war in Pacific was a welcome relief for Bob and all the Allied soldiers in South East Asia

had worn his regulation helmet that night. In pitch darkness, a reassuring pat on his helmet and the words "okay Tommy" said quietly in his ear were a blessed relief.

He spoke of the Liberator aircraft, which were used for reconnaissance. He chatted about his experiences servicing Spitfires at RAF Chandina in Assam, an airstrip close to the Burmese border. It became unusable during monsoon weather and he recalled aircraft landing on bumpy hard ground due to a lack of airstrips with no hard standings to store the aircraft. The monsoon was at its height in July 1944 and hampered them picking through banana groves to find, hopefully abandoned, 'basha' bamboo huts while checking for Japanese snipers. He often waded through swollen rivers perhaps picking up the odd leech as a passenger and narrowly avoiding vermin. Radiantly smiling, he remembered the visits of Lord Mountbatten and Vera Lynn in June 1944, contrasting with the gentle reflection on a service friend sent to relieve him, who had been fatally wounded by a sniper who had gained an advantageous position in a tree during the night. On 2 September 1945, Japan laid down its arms. My dad had served a total of six years and one day and cheered along with his comrades when the Union flag once more flew over the building in Singapore where Japan surrendered, the same flag concealed by prisoners when Singapore surrendered in 1942.

Ruth's letters helped brighten dad's days in Burma. Lifting his spirits with innocent talk of a life in a land on the other side of the world, talking about snowball fights, the latest fashions and the impact the death of President Roosevelt was having on Americans. Ruth would write about her family and her working day before switching to pick up on dad's family information. Ruth's ability to project such a friendly, open and welcoming letter to a man she had never actually met was amazing. They exchanged a light and yet close friendship, which I have had the pleasure to share with Ruth's family who I found after an internet search. These letters are Ruth's legacy as well as dad's. She was a very special person indeed. Thank you, Ruth.

Do you have any family stories to share? /AllAboutHistory @AboutHistoryMag

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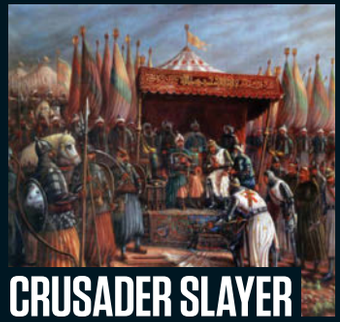
BATTLE OF THE SOMME

How Kitchener's New Army met its fate in the bloody campaign



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What jazz and its heroes did for the Civil Rights Movement



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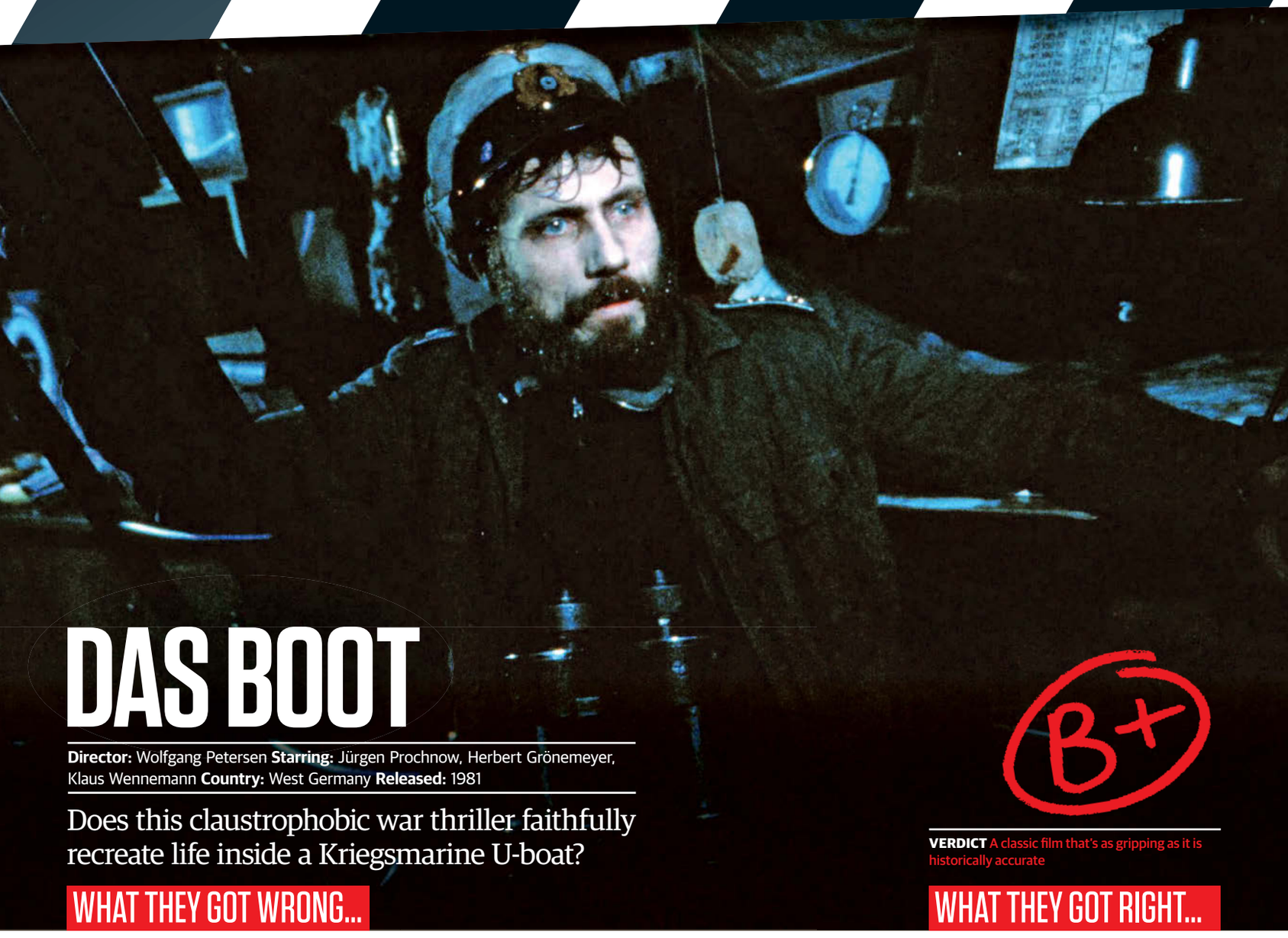
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HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen



DAS BOOT

Director: Wolfgang Petersen **Starring:** Jürgen Prochnow, Herbert Grönemeyer, Klaus Wennemann **Country:** West Germany **Released:** 1981

Does this claustrophobic war thriller faithfully recreate life inside a Kriegsmarine U-boat?

VERDICT A classic film that's as gripping as it is historically accurate

WHAT THEY GOT WRONG...

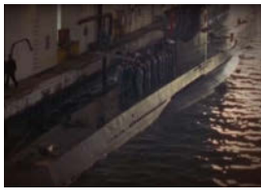
01 As scary as it must have been being pummelled by Royal Navy depth charges, it is likely that the German submariners would not have panicked as much as they do in the film. The submarine would have been a place of quiet discipline, no matter the peril.



02 The drunken party scene is one of the most controversial moments of the film. Many historians feel as if a party of this magnitude would not have happened on board and there is no chance that the officers on the submarine would have got involved.



03 The U-96 docks in the port of La Rochelle in France at both the start and the end of the film. This is not historically accurate as the events in *Das Boot* take place in November 1941, and at this time, the submarine base at La Rochelle was not functional.



04 When the British bombers attack La Rochelle, they cause devastation. At this point in the war, fighter-bombers would not have had the range or capability to attack the port from British airfields. They could have been carrier-based, but this is doubtful.



WHAT THEY GOT RIGHT...

Until the latter stages of the war and an influx of new recruits, the U-boats were one of the least Nazified areas of the Third Reich. In *Das Boot* the crew are indifferent or outwardly sceptical and the one Nazi party member on board is jokingly referred to as Hitlerjugendführer (Our Hitler Youth Leader).



© Alamy

The RAF Collection



Right
B25025 RAF Pilot and Girl Kissing Goodbye
2 Piece Set

Above
B25021 RAF Military Policeman
1 Piece Set in Window Box

Left
B25024 RAF Ground Aircraftsman on Bicycle
2 Piece Set

Our RAF collection of 1:30 scale figures pays tribute to the heroes of the Royal Air Force for their hard work and sacrifice during WW2. Handcrafted in our matte finish style, incorporating highly detailed sculpting plus shading and highlighting in the painting, these figures are truly extraordinary.



2 Piece Set in Window Box

B25019 RAF Pilot 1943 with Faithful Companion



1 Piece Set in Window Box

B25023 Prime Minister Winston Churchill No.1



2 Piece Set in Window Box

B25018 RAF Commemorative Set WAAF with Bicycle, 1943

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